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Difficulty in Meeting Chemical Weapons Destruction Deadlines

PM2403152393 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 2000 GMT 20 Mar 93

[By I. Deryugin and Ye. Gerasimenko from Saratov; from the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] [Deryugin] The veil of secrecy surrounding the Organic Synthesis Technology Institute and the military test range in Shikhany is being lifted. Both installations were involved in chemical weapons development but are now part of a government program as installations perfecting technologies to destroy these weapons. However, a great deal remains unclear.

Military scientists think that it will be extremely hard for our country to keep to the time frames laid down in the international Convention on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons as regards the destruction of war gases since we have not yet perfected technologies for the destruction of various kinds of chemical weapons. The specific areas where this will occur have not been decided, and the government program has itself been sent back for considerable further work. The residential area of Shikhany, inhabited by 15,000 people, has not as yet received the special status conferred on an installation associated with chemical weapons destruction. This is arousing concern among the local population, who are demanding compensation and concessions for living in this special zone.

Disarmament Expert Favors Nonnuclear Defense Systems

OW2203144693 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1423 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Report by diplomatic correspondents Andrey Borodin, Dmitriy Voskoboynikov and Igor Porshnev; from the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature—following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The replacement of nuclear determent by non-nuclear defense systems opens much greater prospects than simple nuclear disarmament does, the vice president of the Russian Strategic Research Institute and a member of the London-based Institute for Strategic Research, Aleksandr Savelyev, told Interfax.

According to him, life has confirmed how right President Ronald Reagan was, when ten years ago, on March 23, 1983, he proposed the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI). The former USSR strongly opposed the idea. At the height of the "cold war" Moscow believed that the Americans sought to gain unilateral advantages and undermine strategic stability. According to the USSR, SDI could be transformed into what it called "strike space weapons."

In the meantime SDI was a defense system from the start, since it provided for replacing nuclear systems with non-nuclear ones, and, consequently, for lowering the level of nuclear confrontation, the expert noted.

According to Savelyev, the fact that Russia and the USA no longer view each other as potential adversaries has dispelled fears connected with the possible gaining of superiority by means of deploying defense systems by one of the two sides. "The new threats to peace raised once again the issue of the role played by defense systems. The proliferation of nuclear missiles and the emergence of new nuclear powers, such as Ukraine, on the world map became the greatest threat," he said.

According to the expert, this paves the way for broad interaction between Russia and the USA. An agreement on this was reached in principle last year, when President Boris Yeltsin was visiting Washington. Groups have already been formed to work out the concept and technical details of a Russian-American program, which other countries can join.

Baltic States' Statement on Support for Yeltsin

LD2303222893 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 2000 GMT 23 Mar 93

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] The Baltic states remember well Yeltsin's immense help in the struggle for their independence. Today the heads of state of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania signed a joint statement expressing full support for the democratic forces in Russia. The Baltic states, the statement says, are expressing the hope and conviction that the crisis in Russia will be resolved in a peaceful way by the Russian Government and the people. This will correspond to the interests of the peoples in the federation and the interests of Russia's partners throughout the world.

Preparations for Yerevan CIS Summit Under Way

LD2303203493 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1928 GMT 23 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Tigran Liloyan]

[Text] Yerevan, 23 Mar (ITAR-TASS)—A summit of CIS heads of state in Yerevan is to take place as planned on 30 April, unless something unpredictable happens in the republics of the former USSR. This was stated by Armenian Foreign Minister Vagan Papazyan in Yerevan today.

In an interview with the ITAR-TASS correspondent he reported that it is possible that the heads of diplomatic departments of the Commonwealth countries will also meet in the capital of Armenia a day before the summit. The minister stressed that intensive preparations for this event are under way. In particular, the relevant preparatory commission has been set up in the republic's government.

Parliamentary Assembly Examines Tajik Security Problems

OW2403165993 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1531 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Report prepared by Andrey Pershin, Andrey Petrovskiy, and Vladimir Shishlin; edited by Boris Grishchenko; from the "Presidential Bulletin" feature—item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] A working group of the CIS Inter-parliamentary Assembly headed by Sergey Stepashin, Chairman of the Defense and Security Committee of the Russian Supreme Soviet, is currently visiting in Dushanbe. The delegation intends to hold talks with the Tajik government on the issues related to the implementation of the Minsk agreements of the CIS heads of states in regards to strengthening CIS state borders and promoting the CIS Collective Security Agreement.

In an interview to an Interfax correspondent, First Deputy Chairman Abulmajid Dostiyev of the Tajik parliament emphasized that the delegation would be provided every opportunity to examine the problems experienced by the republic.

IF [INTERFAX] Note: The delegation is visiting the republic on a request by the Tajik government at the CIS Inter-parliamentary Assembly session in St Petersburg in December. A report on the results of the delegation's visit to Tajikistan will be addressed at the CIS Inter-parliamentary Assembly session in April.

Ukraine, Azerbaijan To Join Parliamentary Assembly

OW2403165793 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1530 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Report prepared by Andrey Pershin, Andrey Petrovskiy, and Vladimir Shishlin; edited by Boris Grishchenko; from the "Presidential Bulletin" feature—item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Azerbaijan is ready to join the CIS Inter-parliamentary Assembly since the Azerbaijani parliamentarians are fully content with its working procedures and organizational structure. In the words of Mikhail Krotov, chief of the Secretariat at the Council of the Inter-parliamentary Assembly, Chairman of the Azerbaijani Supreme Soviet, Isa Kamberov, expressed this viewpoint during his recent meeting with Russian Speaker Ruslan Khasbulatov in Baku.

In the meantime, Mikhail Krotov observed that Azerbaijan is not a Commonwealth member, therefore its deputies will only have the status of observers and participate in the work of the Assembly on the level of its commissions.

Mr Krotov indicated that Ukrainian deputies also agreed to take part in the work of the commissions of the Inter-Parliamentary Assembly.

Fuel, Energy Ministers From Former USSR To Meet

OW2403142993 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1322 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The fuel and energy ministers from former Soviet republics belonging to the Intergovernmental Council on Oil and Gas will meet March 30 in Moscow to elect the council's executive bodies and adopt a program for stabilizing the Russian oil and gas complex.

At the meeting in Moscow the ministers will elect a standing secretariat of the council and agree on specific ways to help stabilize the Russian oil and gas complex. Participants in the meeting plan to discuss the level of investments in the development of deposits in Western

Siberia, coordinate the volume of drilling, the construction of roads, and the financing of repairs on wells not in use, for a total output of up to 700,000 tons of oil a day. Fuel and energy complex leaders also recommend that prime ministers of the republics in the council meet September 30 in Alma-Ata to discuss the stabilization of the gas and oil branches of industry in these states in 1994.

The Intergovernmental Council, which was formed at a meeting of prime ministers of CIS states, Lithuania, Georgia, and Moldova in Surgut on March 1 of this year to coordinate efforts for overcoming the crisis in the fuel and energy complex, unites 12 of the 15 former Soviet republics. Turkmenistan, Latvia, and Estonia declined to join the council. Nonetheless, Russian Minister of Fuel and Energy Yuriy Shafranik invited representatives of Turkmenistan to participate in the Moscow meeting, which will "take into consideration the possibilities and interests of Turkmenistan," which is second only to Russia as the largest exporter of gas in the former USSR.

ITAR-TASS Carries Press Review for 25 Mar

LD2503124193 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1231 GMT 25 Mar 93

["Press Review"—ITAR-TASS headline]

[Text] Moscow March 25 TASS—Today's Moscow-based press highlights reactions to the current political confrontation in the upper echelons of power in Russia "one thing is utterly clear: however keen a political dispute in the centre, one should not overstep a certain limit, just as in any dispute. Overstepping the limit would lead to disintegration of the statehood and territorial integrity of Russia... Beyond that limit, there would be no winners any longer," writes KRASNAYA ZVEZDA (Red Star).

KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA, commenting on the results of Wednesday's [24 March] meeting of the Russian parliament and, in particular, its decision to convene the 9th congress of the People's Deputies of Russia on March 26, points out that the parliamentary and extra-parliamentary battles have obviously resulted "in a temporary truce between the feuding sides."

Russian President Boris Yeltsin, upon having abridged by half the original version of a decree "on the activities of executive bodies until the crisis of power is overcome" and changed the wording, has made it virtually invulnerable, the newspaper noted. This has "greatly spoiled the appetite of a number of deputies. Thereby, it would be extremely difficult for Yeltsin's opponents to convince anyone that he has committed the most terrible sin (the renewed text of the decree bears no mention about a special rule). And this means that the question of his resignation thus gets automatically obviated," KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA pointed out.

On the same subject, NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA (Independent Newspaper) points out that Wednesday's meeting of Boris Yeltsin, Russian parliament chairman Ruslan Khasbulatov, Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin and chief justice of the Constitutional Court Valeriy Zorkin in the Kremlin produced no result.

The newspaper's opinion is that "if the congress does not remove the president from power (or if it even does not bring up the issue), this would be, of course, Yeltsin's full triumph... If the congress does remove him, which Yeltsin's entourage fears, this would be a thing apart. But then the president himself would be to blame," the newspaper maintains.

In addition to numerous reports about Wednesday's parliament meeting and confrontation between the executive and legislative branches of power, SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA runs a headline which reads: "The People's Deputies, Save Russia (exclamation)." These are words from a telegramme that came in to the newspaper PRAVDA runs the full text of the Russian president's above-mentioned decree under the headline "We Waited for a Decree but Received an Order: Don't Stick Your Neck Out."

PRAVDA also front pages a report on the closure of the "600 seconds" television programme in St. Petersburg on Tuesday in view of repeated breaches of Russian legislation.

KRASNAYA ZVEZDA runs an article by Sergey Rogov, dr. of science (history), under the headline "What Place We Shall Take in the World." The article points out in particular that "Russia has been and will remain a great European and Asian power."

Touching upon the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the newspaper notes that however painful the process, it is impossible to restore the Soviet Union in its previous form and that attempts to reanimate it "may lead to a civil war."

NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA carries an interview with Vladimir Grinev, deputy chief of the Ukrainian parliament, who speaks about the need "to change representative power bodies more often" at such complex historical moments which Ukraine is now living through.

The press runs reports from flashpoints about the ongoing fierce fighting in the north of Nagorno-Karabakh, and an aggravation of Russian-Georgian relations, one of the causes of which is the lack of an agreement on the status of Russian troops in the Caucasus.

The Russian government newspaper ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI carries an article by Avgust Mishin, Dr. of Science (Law) and professor at Moscow State University, who points out that the application of an impeachment procedure to Russian reality is legitimate in principle, although the current constitution's article about impeachment "is very poorly and incompetently written."

At the same time Mishin believes that the Constitutional Court judgement itself, which was passed after a 12-hour discussion, about the possibility of impeaching President Yeltsin is not constitutional.

Mishin substantiates the conclusion by saying that "Professor Zorkin, chief justice of the Constitutional Court, prior to the court session, had formulated in parliament a charge against Yeltsin, accusing him of staging a coup d'etat, not on the grounds of a legal document but on the strength of the Russian president's address to the people, the address which is neither more nor less than a 'protocol of intent.'"

"I am for radical reforms with a reasonable pace of their introduction," Belarusian Parliament Chief Stanislav Shushkevich said in an interview published in today's SELSKAYA ZHIZN (Rural Life).

Having declared in favour of carrying out economic reforms in the republic, Shushkevich at the same time underscored the need to maintain the previous contacts with partners and keep old markets in ex-Soviet republics and foreign countries.

"The latest developments connected with the Russian president's address to the people have undoubtedly hastened the polarisation of political forces," the newspaper TRUD observes.

Having pointed out that the parties have divided into "two camps—for and against the president," TRUD stresses "the unanimity of all party leaders in their pleas to keep calm and observe legality and order."

Article Says U.S. Support 'May Not Be Unconditional'

PM2503104393 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 25 Mar 93 p 7

[Article by correspondent Vladislav Drobkov: "Will Reforms Supplant Democracy?"]

[Text] Washington, 24 Mar—The virtually unilateral proclamation of one-man rule by B. Yeltsin has thrown political, academic, and journalistic circles here into confusion.

Reporters have bombarded President Clinton with questions about the fate of his coming meeting with Yeltsin. U.S. Secretary of State W. Christopher has delivered a speech in Chicago on the administration's plans regarding aid to Russia. Leading observers and congressmen are discussing the possible outcome of the Russian crisis and the prospects for Washington's relations with Moscow...

The most obvious trends so far have been the following: The U.S. Administration's fear—despite its obvious preference for Yeltsin—of tying itself too closely to him and giving him "carte blanche," as it were; a fear that the situation may slide into violence, seeing a limitation of civil rights and intervention by the Army; a recognition of the fact that Russia's fate must be decided by its own people, and that excessive involvement in the crisis by the United States and the West as a whole can only harm matters.

Thus, while stating its support for B. Yeltsin as "the only popularly elected leader," the administration is nonetheless hinting that this support may not be unconditional and will be provided only if Russia observes basic civil rights and freedoms. "Russia must remain a democracy during this period while it moves toward a market economy. This is the basis—the only basis—for U.S.-Russian partnership," W. Christopher stated unambiguously in his speech to the World Affairs Council of Chicago.

President B. Clinton, speaking in the White House, also stated that "Russia is and should continue to be a democracy." He expressed support for Yeltsin, "his reform government, and all reformers in Russia." Since almost everyone in our country is a reformer these days, the U.S. President's support seems quite broad. The view that maintaining democracy in Russia "accords best with the long-term interests of the United States and of the Russians themselves" was voiced Monday by R. Cheney, the former Pentagon boss in the Republican administration. And a WASHINGTON POST editorial warns that, in the event of openly supporting Yeltsin, the U.S. President could become "hostage to a Russian leader" who has a tendency not only for democracy but also for strong-arm methods.

At at press conference Tuesday B. Clinton stated his readiness to go to Moscow to show support for the Russian president. But his April meeting with Yeltsin will most probably go ahead at its planned venue—Vancouver. All the more so since Russian Foreign Minister A. Kozyrev, who has been here since Monday, has not raised the question of changing the venue for the first meeting between the two presidents. According to reports from administration sources, events in Russia have increased rather than diminished Washington's interest in the meeting.

According to a view widely held here, Yeltsin may be scared to leave Moscow in the current tense situation. What kind of a president is he and "what kind of power does he have if he cannot leave the country for a couple of days!" exclaimed the ultraconservative observer P. Buchanan.

More and more voices can be heard here warning of the dangers of supporting Yeltsin's desire for one-man rule and unlimited power. "He has essentially proclaimed himself a dictator for 30 days," Harvard Professor M. Goldman, a well-known Soviet affairs expert here, stated. "Maybe he had no other choice, but as an American I must say that it is dangerous."

In the opinion of most local observers the key to the fate of power in Russia lies with the military. "This struggle is above all a power struggle. It will not be decided by a constitutional vote, or by a constitutional court, or even by a plebiscite... I think that at some point in the not-too-distant future the military and the secret police will take sides. And when they begin to do that, the outcome will be decided." Z. Brzezinski stated on a special television program on events in Russia.

I too took part in a private broadcast on current events in Moscow at the "BETA" Television Studio. Speaking during the program, Democratic Senator B. Bradley and Republican Senator R. Lugar agreed that the administration should show support for Yeltsin and increase aid to Russia. But at the same time they stated that only the Russians themselves have the right to decide Russia's fate and the outcome of the current clash between president and parliament.

Virtually all the television debates and innumerable commentaries recall how B. Clinton himself criticized his erstwhile rival G. Bush for staying committed too long to Gorbachev when he had lost real power. Is the current administration about to make the same mistake by focusing its attention on Yeltsin? That question is being asked here increasingly often. "The summit revives the specter of the United States supporting a leader who could be stripped of his post at any time," CNN commentator Ralph Begleiter warns.

According to reports that have appeared here but have not been officially confirmed, the U.S. Administration has sent a message to B. Yeltsin with an appeal for a compromise solution to be found to the crisis. Clinton did not give any details but stated that he had twice sent messages to Yeltsin over the past few days. The first was after his statement on the introduction of special rule.

The second was a message of condolence on the death of the Russian president's mother.

Judging by the discussions under way in the United States, particularly following the Constitutional Court ruling, people here are seriously worried that the Russian parliament could resort to impeachment.

When Clinton was asked directly how the United States would react to Yeltsin's probable removal from power, the President refused to disclose how he would act in "that hypothetical situation." Nor did he directly answer a question about how Yeltsin's departure might affect his plans to provide additional U.S. aid to Russia. Talking about the role of the United States, he stressed that "ultimately the Russian people themselves will have to solve" their existing problems.

Similar judgments are currently being passed by most local politicians, academics, and journalists. When a recent CIA director was asked on a television program if the United States was painting itself into a corner, "putting all its eggs in Yeltsin's basket," and what it should do to resolve the crisis, R. Gates replied that the "decisions influencing the outcome of events in Moscow and in Russia should now be made there." "Our influence," Gates continued, "has been and continues to be limited... It is wrong to think that decisions which might be reached in Washington can really affect circumstances in today's Russia."

As our own political observers used to love to say, it is hard to disagree with that view.

'Consistency' of U.S. Stance on Russia Noted

PM2403202993 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 25 Mar 93 p 3

[Aleksandr Golts commentary: "B. Clinton Makes Choice"]

[Text] It should be observed that, in its approach to the political crisis in Russia, the U.S. Administration is far more consistent than certain representatives of Yeltsin's own team. In recent days Clinton personally, his vice president, the secretary of state, and the defense secretary have unambiguously and definitely expressed support for democratic reforms in Russia.

This approach was demonstrated in extensive form in the secretary of state's program speech on foreign policy questions. "To help Russia build a free society and a market economy is the most important strategic task of our time," he stated. If we succeed in this, Christopher stressed, "we will lay the basis for our stable security in the next century." "However, if Russia finds itself in the grip of anarchy or returns to the times of despotism, the price which we will have to pay will be terrifying. We are looking at the revival of the nuclear threat, the growth of the U.S. military budget, the spread of instability, and also the defeat of the democratic movement that is sweeping the whole world," Christopher believes.

Just as manifest a desire to give every assistance to Russia's reforms was also demonstrated during talks held in Washington in recent days by Russian Federation Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev. Not only were issues of the forthcoming summit meeting discussed (at which Clinton intends to present a package of specific initiatives to assist reforms in our country), the Administration also declared its support for holding in April a meeting of G-7 finance and foreign ministers, again in order to coordinate the joint efforts of industrially developed countries in assisting Russia.

At the same time, it would be incorrect to sugggest that this consistency comes easily. The U.S. press is full of warnings for President Clinton, who is encountering his first major crisis in foreign policy. He is being advised not to gamble on a single political figure. If Yeltsin is removed from power, Kissinger warns, the United States will have to deal with those who have done this and that would not be easy. The argument is also not without foundation that the declaration of support for Yeltsin in the absence of obvious evidence of this support could lead to results the reverse of those expected. Washington simply has no time to make this support palpable, but Clinton has made his choice. He is for supporting B. Yeltsin.

Importance of Western Reaction to Events Viewed

NC2503111793 Moscow Radio Moscow in Persian 1330 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Valentin Gorkayev commentary]

[Text] The daily increasing seriousness of the political situation in Russia has elicited much genuine concern in our country and abroad. The possibility of Russia becoming engulfed in chaos heralds the danger of concomitant dramatic international repercussions. It is obvious that in this regard, we are not only alert to any intense confrontation between Russian President Boris Yeltsin and Parliament, but also to reaction in the West to the events in our country.

Reaction from the West is natural. After all, in view of the size of our country and its wealth of natural resources, Russia cannot remain isolated and lacking close cooperation with the highly developed countries of the West. Their reaction to the confrontation in Russia is clear: They support Yeltsin. U.S. President Bill Clinton said: The United States supports this historical progress by Russia toward democratic reform. Yeltsin is leading this trend and is Russia's democratically elected leader. He is the first to be so elected in Russia's 1,000-year history. Yeltsin, his reformist government, and all those in the country who seek reform enjoy U.S. support.

These remarks by the U.S. President form the most important point of the West's position. Right now this is merely verbal and moral support for the Russian president, but it also is politically important. Russia, which has just experienced a difficult economic crisis, needs

economic as well as political assistance. According to reports, the West has recognized this.

Italian Foreign Minister Emilio Colombo called on the Security Council for specific support for Russian reforms. British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd will leave for Washington soon, and ways to assist Russian reforms will be a priority during his talks with the U.S. Government. Canadian Prime Minister Brian Mulroney expressed concern about the possibility of civil war in Russia, in which case the West might be called on to assist Yeltsin. German Chancellor Helmut Kohl also called on the West to step up support for Russia. It has been announced in Japan that the G-7 countries' foreign and finance ministers could meet in Russia 13 and 14 April to discuss assistance to Russia.

Such swift reaction by the West to the Russian situation generates optimism, but Russia's need for financial assistance to stabilize its economy and continue its reforms is immense. According to current assessments, at least $20 billion is required immediately. For the West, which is experiencing a recession, obtaining this amount is not easy. It can find a way, however, especially if it keeps in mind the strategic importance of the developments in Russia.

Russian Parliament Speaker Ruslan Khasbulatov announced that assistance should be allocated to assist democratic reform, not specific politicians. The West, however, has confidence in Yeltsin and has pinned its hopes on him for the reforms' success. This should be kept in mind.

Commentary Examines West's View

LD2403141693 Moscow Radio Moscow World Service in English 1210 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Commentary by Valentin Gorkayev]

[Excerpts] The world is closely watching the fierce confrontation between President Boris Yeltsin and parliament in Russia. No matter how rich Russia's natural resources are, it cannot develop in isolation without close cooperation with highly industrialized Western states. Their reaction to the political battle in Russia is unequivocal: They support Mr Yeltsin. [passage omitted]

The point is, however, that Russia, living through the hardest economic crisis, needs economic support as well. Judging by reports, this is clearly understood by the West. [passage omitted]

The West's quick reaction to the situation that has shaped out in Russia gives hope that even though Russia's demand for financial aid to stabilize its economy and continue reforms is rather high. [sentence as heard] An estimated $20 billion are urgently needed.

Of course it won't be so easy for the West, facing economic recession, to find such a sum, yet it can afford it, especially taking into account the strategic importance of changes under way in Russia. According to the Russian parliamentary Speaker Ruslan Khasbulatov, aid must be given to democracy rather than concrete politicians. But the West trusts Yeltsin, with whom it links hopes for the success of democratic reforms.

West Seen Preferring Yeltsin

PM2403174193 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 23 Mar 93 p 1

[N. Dolgopolov report: "West Gambles on Yeltsin. But the Cards Are Being Dealt in Moscow"]

[Text] Only French President Francois Mitterrand could dare to dive into the turmoil of the Russian chaos and meet with Boris Yeltsin; and to leave his country four days before parliamentary elections which are turning into an unconditional defeat for h s Socialist Party—and what is more, no mythical privileged relations between the two countries could be brought into the equation here. It is simply that France, like the other Western giants, prefers to rely in state relations on what it sees as powerful partners, rather than give support to political novices. The stakes are being weighed, and even if they have been placed, no immediate change of direction is to be expected—as was the case with Gorbachev, in whom the French believed right up until the end. Something similar is happening with Yeltsin. The fairly obvious support for the Russian president which resounded in the mass media 21 March was swiftly demonstrated 22 March at an official level too: None other than France proposed to discuss the possibility of more effective aid for Russia at an emergency meeting of the big "seven." The voluntary assumption of this lobbyist role is very unusual for the highly cautious France. Sometimes it seems that such a resolute demonstration of unwavering faith somehow affords an opportunity to scorn one's G7 and EEC partners, and to proclaim oneself the leading and most competent adviser in this extremely intricate Russian enigma. But if France, where the president's powers are the virtual image of those which Boris Nikolayevich would like to possess, is the lobbyist, it is Germany which is the main contributor of aid, far outstripping the United States with its less than 10-percent share. Actually, U.S. President Bill Clinton has reacted quite fraternally to his colleague: He has publicly declared that it is Yeltsin who is the only legitimate leader in Russia. While some American political figures went even further than their President: It will be difficult for Yeltsin to leave for Vancouver in these days of crisis, so it would be better for Clinton to fly to Russia and demonstrate his support there on the spot.

But how do you perceive a sharp retort like the following: "It is for you and you alone to sort out your domestic problems"? Its author is former German Foreign Minister Genscher, the very architect of the creation of the new Europe, who, at a recent news conference, was answering a question from me on how to survive and what to do next. It could be that he would also have responded with a similar if somewhat more diplomatic

phrase to all those who, forestalling one another, have now appealed to the West for sympathy and support. We alone can overcome our misfortunes. But having referred here to President Mitterrand, how can one fail to recall his predecessor, Charles de Gaulle. After declaring a referendum, which is the ultimate presidential privilege, the general was sure of victory. France stunned the long-standing leader with an unexpected "non."

Foreign Minister Kozyrev Continues U.S. Visit

Plans for U.S. 'Partnership' Discussed

LD2503060193 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0410 GMT 25 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondents Aleksandr Korolev and Georgiy Shmelev; "Russian Foreign Minister Ends His Visit to Washington"—ITAR-TASS headline]

[Excerpt] Washington, 25 Mar—Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev has offered a concrete plan of action for development of the Russian-American partnership. Speaking on Wednesday [24 March] at American University as part of his working visit to Washington, he stated that such a plan "should be based on mutual economic interests and avoid double standards in relation to rights and obligations of the partners."

In his opinion, both countries should demonstrate the same boldness in their economic thinking as they demonstrate in politics; the obsolete view of the Russian economy as a "communist" one should be rejected; and the Coordinating Committee for Multilateral Export Control restrictions for sales of modern technology to Russia should be lifted. A. Kozyrev has also pointed at the importance of "Russia's gradual, but nevertheless dynamic, integration into the G-7 structure," which should become "an unalienable part of the Russian-American program of cooperation."

He stressed that the popularly elected president of the Russian Federation is a guarantor of the continuation of reforms, and his domestic as well as foreign policy is invariable and predictable. Afterwards, at a meeting with U.S. President Bill Clinton at the White House, concrete steps for broadening American help for economic reforms in Russia were discussed. The U.S. President has stressed that "it is in the U.S. interest that Russia remain a democracy and continue its progress toward a market economy and reduction of the nuclear threat." In his words, this "would save the American people billions of dollars that would not be spent" on maintaining massive nuclear arsenals. "This would be a very good capital investment for America," stressed the President, who also expressed hope that he will manage to convince "the American people and the U.S. Congress."

At the same time, President Clinton noted that the domestic political problems "should be solved by the Russian people themselves, and the United States cannot dictate its will to them." A. Kozyrev said he fully shares the U.S. President's latter thesis and, speaking of the complicated situation in the country, noted that President Yeltsin promotes a flexible policy and is prepared to reach a compromise in order to solve the problems facing the country.

The second round of talks between the Russian minister and U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher took place on the same day. At the end of the talks, the heads of the foreign departments held a brief news conference. [passage omitted]

Kozyrev 'Satisfied' With Talks

LD2503122193 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1104 GMT 25 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS diplomatic correspondent Georgiy Shmelev]

[Text] Moscow, 25 Mar—Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev returned from his working visit to the United States today. He was received by President Bill Clinton, held two rounds of talks with Secretary of State Warren Christopher, and met leaders of the U.S. Congress during his two-day visit.

Andrey Kozyrev told correspondents aboard his aircraft that he was very satisfied with the results of the talks, the main aim of which was to prepare for the upcoming Russo-U.S. summit in Vancouver. He believes that understanding had been reached with representatives of the U.S. Administration that the provisions of "an outline plan of measures for implementation" must be carried out. In other words, fundamental accords on specific forms of cooperation between our countries must be implemented. The minister stressed that the U.S. Administration is well aware that the time has come for purely practical measures in cooperation with Russia but without any political interference in its internal affairs.

Andrey Kozyrev disclosed that everything was ready for the Vancouver meeting. It will take place on the agreed date. However, the foreign minister refused to give any more details of the results of the talks until he had met Boris Yeltsin. Referring to recent events inside the country, Kozyrev noted that there was nothing unexpected about President Yeltsin's actions. They are "totally geared toward compromise and readiness to reach agreement, which, however, the other side does not share."

Kozyrev Cited on Summit, Yeltsin

OW2503115093 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1134 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] "Everything is set" for the meeting of Presidents Boris Yeltsin and Bill Clinton. This summit will mark a new stage in Russo-American relations, a start of specific

action, Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev told Interfax on his arrival in Moscow from Washington Thursday [25 March].

He noted that it had been Russia's proposal to hold the summit in Vancouver, Canada. The minister said that at the moment he did not see the need to change the venue of the meeting, "although there are other opinions."

Kozyrev did not want to forecast what would happen at the 9th Congress of People's Deputies, which is to meet in emergency session Friday. He noted that those who want to impeach President Yeltsin will not succeed, for they have no "practical or legal grounds" for that. In Kozyrev's view, it was the people that gave Yeltsin his mandate and a final decision is up to the people. He said that within a month the people will have an opportunity to make this decision in a referendum on confidence in the president.

Meanwhile, the opposition needs to muster two-thirds of the votes of the 1,033 deputies. The experts who analyzed the balance of forces and the moods of the deputies told Interfax that the opposition may end up 20 to 100 votes short of that target.

Kozyrev Views Talks With Clinton

LD2403214793 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 2054 GMT 24 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS]

[Text] Washington March 24 TASS—Upon completion of talks with the American president, Kozyrev said that the two discussed a wide range of issues connected with the development of cooperation and mutual contacts between Russia and the United States. "We try to avoid the word 'aid,' since it is not popular today either in Russia or the United States, and use cooperation, partnership, mutual contacts instead," the Russian foreign minister said.

As for the development of cooperation, we discussed various forms of contact, including in electric power engineering, development of natural resources and other problems, the Russian foreign minister said.

Commenting on the forthcoming U.S.-Russian summit, Kozyrev said that the summit would take place in Vancouver as previously scheduled at a certain period of time. Preparations for the summit have been completed, its agenda and the programme have been worked out, Kozyrev said.

Kozyrev said that during these talks a question of Russia's joining the G-7 was not discussed. He noted that talks with other members of the G-7 and other preparations are needed for this.

The meeting between Clinton and Kozyrev consisted of two parts—talks in the presence of other officials and a one-on-one conversation.

Summit Venue To Be Decided in 'Very Near Future'

PM2403181593 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 25 Mar 93 First Edition p 3

[Report by Maksim Gan: "Venue for Summit Will Be Finally Determined by U.S. and Russian Presidents"]

[Text] The switching of the venue for the Russian-U.S. summit from Vancouver to Moscow could be a symbol of support for the policy Boris Yeltsin is pursuing, Russian Federation Vice Premier Boris Fedorov said Tuesday [23 March] at a press conference. He said that the idea of switching the venue for the meeting "is already being discussed."

IZVESTIYA was told at the president's press service that the idea of switching the summit to Moscow is indeed being discussed. In particular it was put forward by several members of the presidential council at the session on Tuesday. In the opinion of Boris Fedorov in the situation which has taken shape the Russian president should not be absent from the country for long. But the final decision has not yet been taken.

At the same time the Russian Foreign Ministry confirmed that so far there have been no changes to the meeting planned in Canada. This was also stated by Andrey Kozyrev, head of Russia's foreign diplomatic department, to journalists in Washington after discussing with U.S. Secretary of State W. Christopher the specific issues for the forthcoming 3-4 April Vancouver summit: "There are no changes. We are focusing our attention on preparing a good grounding for holding productive summit talks." According to news agency reports, the sides have already agreed on the procedure for the talks and their agenda.

As of this moment the White House has not received an official request from the Russian side to switch the venue for the meeting. White House press secretary Dee Dee Myers has stated that Washington continues to be guided by plans according to which the summit should be held in Vancouver in early April.

To all appearances both sides are prepared to switch the venue for the summit. Especially as there is still time for that and Washington has confirmed its readiness to take this step. If the Russian side is interested in changing the summit venue then most likely an official request will be made by Andrey Kozyrev at the end of his talks with U.S. President B. Clinton and with W. Christopher. In any case the final decision will be made in the very near future taking into account the talks which have been held in Washington, IZVESTIYA was told at the Russian president's press service. And the two presidents will take it.

Special Envoy Talbott's Senate Hearing Remarks Cited

PM2503115593 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 25 Mar 93 First Edition p 7

[ITAR-TASS report: "Strobe Talbott Will Not Stray from the Path"]

[Text] "A man in the right place" is how people are describing the U.S. President's appointment of Strobe Talbott, the eminent U.S. expert on Russian problems, to the post of the U.S. secretary of state's special adviser for the new independent states—as a special envoy.

The hearings to confirm his nomination to this new and important post began 23 March in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, ITAR-TASS reports.

Sometimes Talbott's statements sounded very sharp, but on the other hand they were obviously persuasive to Americans. "We do not want the emergence of a nuclear Yugoslavia in the heart of Eurasia," he stated, justifying the U.S. vital interest in the outcome of the events now taking place in the former Soviet Union. "Nor, naturally, do we want to see the resurrection of a new dictatorship which would oppress its own citizens, threaten its neighbors, and force the United States to return to cold war positions."

During the hearings there were many flattering words addressed to Strobe Talbott who, on his own admission, began to study the Russian language in preparatory school and has "devoted a large part of the last 30 years of his life to trying to understand Russia and the former Soviet Union." "For as long as I have known him personally I have been struck by his analytical abilities, his interest in public affairs, and his extensive knowledge of Russia and other states of the Soviet Union," stated Senator Richard Lugar (a Republican from Indiana).

Colonel Comments on U.S. Strategic Defense Initiative

LD2403140993 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 0430 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Interview Colonel Aleksandr Ivanovich Rodionov by correspondent Mikhail Arkhipov; place and date not given—recorded]

[Text] Ten years ago, on 23 March 1983, the U.S. Strategic Defense Initiative [SDI] was announced. The world community viewed it as a practical implementation of the fictional Star Wars. For the former Soviet Union, the prospect of Star Wars was quite tangible, and it called for a counter-initiative. To tell us how things stand these days, here is Colonel Aleksandr Ivanovich Rodionov, being interviewed by our correspondent Mikhail Arkhipov:

[Begin recording] [Rodionov] Much has changed in 10 years. The program's priorities, and also the volume of funding, have undergone changes. The main trend of the program, however, has remained unchanged throughout, as I see it. The primary aim of SDI was to obtain state-of-the-art technologies for the purpose of ensuring the security of the United States by using and developing new space weapons.

Despite the fact that the climate of relations between the United States and the Russian Federation has become significantly warmer of late, it is too early to speak of possible full-scale partnership in the area of strategic defense. This is why. A whole range of agreements signed in this area notwithstanding, Americans have long viewed us as possible partners [sentence as heard]. In the end, they have reached the conclusion that partnership can only take the shape of the purchase of state-of-the-art space technologies. This is, on the whole, what is happening now. Naturally enough, we are not getting anything in return in terms of technological innovations.

The Americans are building the SDI system. Whatever shape it has taken by now—be it along the lines envisaged by President Reagan or as envisaged by the current President Clinton—they are building it for themselves. They do not intend to share all those strategic innovations with anyone. They are solving the problems of their own national security, and by no means solving Russia's problems or those with whom they cooperate in their work on SDI.

A whole range of successful, or even brilliant, experiments have been carried out within the framework of SDI. In the course of these experiments, they intercepted in space either dummy warheads, mock warheads, or even real warheads. All this was done for experimental purposes, however, in order to test the concept.

As to whether we need such a system, all I can say is that we have probably not paid serious attention to these things. After all, while building their SDI, the Americans put their stakes on space. They proceeded from the assumption that many problems can be solved from space. If we turn to reconnaissance, objects of the size of a large orange can be discerned from space. It is also possible to read license plates on vehicles and to determine the nature of an enterprise from the smoke discharged from its funnels. All these things contribute to assessing the level of economic development of a state. In military terms, they can give advance warning to the country's leadership about any mobilization of forces.

[Arkhipov] Aleksandr Ivanovich, what about the Military-Space Forces? Do they have anything to do with the Russian SDI, and do their plans include the construction of such an SDI?

[Rodionov] I think it would be incorrect to say that the military-space forces of the Russian Federation can, in some manner, be in opposition to SDI, or that they can somehow join in the creation of the Russian SDI. The simple reason is that, in essence, no such work is conducted in Russia.

[Arkhipov] But wasn't there an asymmetrical option, proclaimed by the last president of the USSR?

[Rodionov] A long time has passed since the asymmetrical option, which had little to do with the development of state-of-the- art technologies, particularly space technologies. In principle, all the work has been suspended. In my view, the attitude we took toward these things was singularly unstatesman-like. It was extremely slighting. One obvious example is that we did not pay serious attention to the development of new technologies, including space technologies. We did not even pay attention to the fact that the Americans obtained new composite materials, which they went on to use on a national scale. Whereas with us, when we proclaimed our anti-SDI, it was on the one hand a mere political gesture, and on the other, it was a response from certain individuals in the then military leadership. [end recording]

Slovakia's Meciar Arrives, To Meet Chernomyrdin, Yeltsin

LD2403175893 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1650 GMT 24 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Boris Krivoshey]

[Text] Moscow March 24 TASS—Chairman of the Slovak Government Vladimir Meciar has arrived in Moscow on Wednesday.

This is his first visit to Moscow as the head of the government.

The programme of the visit includes Meciar's talks with Prime Minister of the Russian Government Viktor Chernomyrdin. Meciar is also expected to meet with Russian President Boris Yeltsin.

Russian diplomats believe there are good prerequisites for the establishment and development of relations between Russia and Slovakia.

After the disintegration of Czechoslovakia into Czechia [as received] and Slovakia at the beginning of 1993, Russia and Slovakia have to create yet a legal basis for their relations. Nowadays, the sides are displaying a great interest in the development of economic and other contacts.

Meets Chernomyrdin

LD2503120593 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1204 GMT 25 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS diplomatic correspondent Boris Krivoshey]

[Text] Moscow March 25 TASS—An agreement on economic and scientific and technical cooperation was signed as a result of the talks which were held today between Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin and Chairman of the Slovak Government Vladimir Meciar who arrived in Moscow on an official visit on Wednesday.

Assessing the talks, the Russian prime minister said that the talks were very good. We "had many things," he said, "which connected us in the past, and now, I think, we have work to do in prospect."

Vladimir Meciar, on his part, said that the Slovak delegation's visit is an expression of confidence to the Russian Government and President Yeltsin. He stressed that Russia and Slovakia should create new mechanisms of cooperation in economy, trade and other fields of activities.

Grachev Statement on Su-27 Downing in Georgia

PM2403124993 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 23 Mar 93 p 1

[Undated "Statement by Russian Federation Minister of Defense"]

[Text] The Georgian side's acts of provocation are continuing against the Russian troops stationed in the zone of the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict. These acts have recently been becoming more and more dangerous.

There is no doubt that certain circles in Georgia are becoming more and more persistent in their attempts to draw the Russian troops into the armed conflict. They are using every means to achieve this, even forgery and provocations. Evidence of this is Georgian strike aircrafts' use of Russian markings and identification symbols during their recent bombing strikes on the Russian Federation Defense Ministry's earthquake laboratory and military sanatorium in Sukhumi and Eshery. As has already been reported, people have been killed and wounded as a result of them.

After receiving information on two airborne targets moving in the direction of Sukhumi early in the morning of 19 March, a Russian Su-27 fighter-interceptor piloted by Pilot 1st Class Major Shipko and designed to protect facilities of the Russian Armed Forces on Abkhaz territory and prevent potential acts of piracy, was scrambled. It should be emphasized that this type of plane is not designed for hitting ground targets. He only had weapons for an air battle on board.

Having carrying out its mission, the plane was, according to preliminary reports, shot down by Georgian antiaircraft defense facilities when returning to the airfield where it was based, and crashed 11 kilometers northwest of Sukhumi. The pilot Major Shipko was killed.

The Georgian leadership is deliberately attempting to present the incident in question supposedly as evidence of the Russian Air Force's involvement in the bombing of Sukhumi. In this connection the Russian Armed Forces leadership categorically rejects such fabrications and expresses a resolute protest to the Georgian side.

The Russian Ministry of Defense expresses its deepest condolences to the dead man's family. I consider that the circumstances of the Russian pilot's death needs to be investigated in a thorough and objective manner. The Georgian side should create all the necessary conditions for Russian specialists to participate in this investigation. We will bring their results to the notice of the general public.

Shilin on Crisis Affecting Foreign Relations

OW2403205393 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2019 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Despite political troubles at home, the Russian Government is continuing to attach great importance to further economic relations with other countries, Deputy Minister for Foreign Economic Relations Viktor Shilin said speaking at a news conference on the outcome of the meeting by the Inter-Governmental Russian-Finnish Commission for Economic Cooperation in Moscow on Wednesday [24 March].

Russian Vice-Premier Georgiy Khizha and Finnish Trade and Industry Minister Pekka Tuovisto met to discuss Russia's FM 44 Mn debt to Finland as well as the prospects of new credits and cooperation in the two countries' border regions.

Silin spoke of indications of "slow, albeit steady increase in bilateral trade" linking the progress to the legal groundwork set up last year for cooperation by Russian and Finnish firms and companies.

For his part, Tuovisto also appearing at the news conference, said that new credits to Russia were being "delayed only because of legal niceties" and "the issue may well be resolved before long".

On whether the current unrest in Russia was likely to affect bilateral economic relations, Tuovisto said that bilateral trade had never been affected by a change in the political regime either in Russia or Finland. However, he said Finland wanted to see further democratic reform in Russia.

Kunadze Interviewed on ASEAN Relations

OW2403223493 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1951 GMT 24 Mar 93

["Exclusive" interview with Georgiy Kunadze, deputy minister of foreign affairs, by INTERFAX correspondent Marina Chernukha; date and place not given—item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The deputy foreign minister of Russia Georgiy Kunadze has returned from Malaysia and Singapore where he was with a delegation, led by the vice-president Aleksandr Rutskoy. The Interfax correspondent Marina Chernukha discusses with him the prospects of Russia's relations with Asian and Pacific countries.

IF [INTERFAX]: As is known, the relations of first the USSR and then of Russia with the ASEAN countries were rather cool. Can your delegation's visit be regarded as the beginning of reorientation in Russia's foreign policy?

KUNADZE: Our country's ties with ASEAN have been sluggish for two reasons. The first one is that these countries have had some experience of dealing with Marxist extremists, notorious for their savagery. As a result, they have developed strong distaste for communism. No wonder, they were so much weary of the USSR.

When Vietnam occupied Cambodia in 1978, the ASEAN countries received concrete confirmation of their fears. The Democratic Republic of Vietnam at that time actually did not conceal its goals to set up an Indochina federation of three states - Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos. It's an open secret that the USSR helped Vietnam in everything, and for this reason, we, naturally, could hardly expect some meaningful contacts in South East Asia.

The Soviet Union always underestimated ASEAN. Its political guideline was: those who are not with us are against us. The Americans behaved more subtly. Besides, unlike the Soviet Union, they had an opportunity to help these countries economically, politically, and militarily.

In short, the USSR looked at ASEAN as second rate association, as a product of political gambling between its adversaries, seeking to curb Vietnamese and Soviet influence in Indochina.

The Soviet Union was not too keen to do business with ASEAN since the association countries also bought manufactured goods and sold raw material. If you recall, those years saw strained relations with China. Naturally, the USSR tried to somewhat flirt with the regional states in searches for potential allies in confrontation with China. Anti-Chinese sentiments have always been felt in the region since many big businessmen were of Chinese origin and were quite influential there. The Soviet Union tried to exploit this factor but with little success.

These factors led to the situation in which Soviet relations with Indochina had neither substance nor prospect. In the meantime, ASEAN has grown quite well to become the only international organization in Asia and the Pacific, which has proved its stability and influence in regional affairs.

Russia has had to start relations with Asia almost from scratch. On the diplomatic front, it has found fewer real opportunities to do business with these countries than the USSR had. It has neither funds to buy goods nor to give credits. But positive factors have appeared, too.

IF: Which concretely ?

KUNADZE: The current situation is not hopeless. What is important above all is that ideological barriers have been smashed. When Malaysia's Foreign Minister visited Moscow last July, he remarked that now when

Russia had abandoned communism, there were no obstacles at all to bilateral relations' development. As we can see, the ASEAN countries as most Asian countries give up stereotypes with difficulty. Nearly one year had passed after the events of August 1991, before they believed that the RF [Russian Federation] did not intend to return to communism.

What also matters is the clear-cut position of Russia toward Cambodia. In keeping with an earlier tradition, the USSR sided with the Vietnamese in supporting the government in Phnom Penh. Now Moscow has made it clear that it regards all four Cambodian factions as equals. Russia spares no effort to settle the conflict in Cambodia. It takes no sides, and that makes its policy credible.

There is also a need to develop trade and economic ties with these countries. While the USSR neglected ASEAN, much changed in the region. The Association states manufacture computers, cars, high tech equipment with global demand. Russia could also buy these goods along with some rare raw materials.

The ASEAN countries are interested in Russian commodities, too and can afford importing them. The first step could be a contract with Malaysia on the supply of MIG-29 and MI-35 helicopters there. This deal is far from completion, but the situation should not be dramatized. Patience and consistence are essential in future tough competition against both American and European rivals mainly because Russia has never exported arms to these countries.

What's meant is not a one-time contract to buy a batch of aircraft but to acquire the vital system of their maintenance. Ultimately, this means the reorientation of part of the aviation on military hardware of a different type. Such a decision is highly responsible and is adopted for long. If the deal is successfully concluded, it will set a precedent for ASEAN to get not only Russian military equipment but also technology to maintain it on site. This will give impetus to further cooperation and make it more efficient.

On the whole, in my opinion, Russia's relations with ASEAN have been favorable. Last year Andrey Kozyrev was in Manila, where he attended an enlarged session of the foreign ministers of the ASEAN countries. Virtually all Asian and Pacific countries plus the United States were invited. Russia has not become a full-fledged partner at such conferences yet. Apparently, it will be represented at the former level there. However, I think Russia will become a full-fledged partner in ASEAN soon.

I regard as bright the prospects of Russia's relations with Asian and Pacific countries, all the more so we wish that Indochina would no longer be conditionally divided into two camps: the Indochina countries and the ASEAN states. Vietnam, where the situation has been changing very rapidly, has been more and more inclined to join ASEAN. Russia welcomes its desire. Time is near when all South East Asian countries will be admitted into ASEAN to boost its prestige.

IF: What is Japan's reaction to Russia's attempts to establish contacts with ASEAN?

KUNADZE. I would say that Japan is not going to obstruct our effort. But what's more important for Russia is to know whether Japan is ready to help it. Regrettably, we still need concrete assistance in Asian and Pacific affairs.

Such purposeful help is usually given to an ally or to a friend. Russia has not become such for Japan yet. By and large, the interests of this country and Japan in that region do not clash. The two countries could get along very well, profiting together rather than harming each other. On the other hand, it's now difficult to speak about full-scale cooperation since Russia and Japan have different opportunities to influence the region.

Further on Radioactive Waste Dumping in Sea of Japan

OW2503022293 Tokyo KYODO in English 0140 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Text] Moscow, March 25 KYODO—The Russian Government on Wednesday [24 March] admitted dumping radioactive waste in the Sea of Japan, the Sea of Okhotsk, the North Pacific, and the Barents Sea between 1959 and 1992.

Aleksey Yablokov, state counsellor for ecology and health, gave President Boris Yeltsin a report saying radioactive waste from nuclear-powered submarines and a nuclear-powered icebreaker were dumped at sea.

A Russian branch of the environmental group Greenpeace disclosed the report Wednesday. It was the first time Russian authorities have confirmed that radioactive wastes were dumped at sea.

The report said that in the Far East liquid radioactive wastes were dumped at nine locations including the Sea of Japan, and solid wastes were released at four places. It did not, however, specify specific dumping locations.

Liquid radioactive wastes in the Far East region totaled 12,300 curies while solid dangerous wastes amounted to 6,200 curies, the report said. A curie is a unit used to measure the amount of material that generates a certain level of activity.

The report said the dangerous practice continued because there is no land depository and reprocessing plant for radioactive wastes. It also said that unless Russia stops operating nuclear-powered ships, the sea dumping of radioactive wastes will continue.

The report asked the government to act promptly on the matter.

MI-8 Helicopters Reportedly Contracted To Work in PRC

OW2403143493 Moscow Russian Television and Dubl Networks in Russian 0557 GMT 17 Mar 93

[G. Medvedeva report; from the "Dalniy Vostok" program]

[Text] [Medvedeva] Spring came, but instead of rooks two helicopters flew in from the south and landed on the airfield at the Vladivostok aviation enterprise. These brand new MI-8 helicopters from Stavropol made the extremely long flight in order to work on contract in China.

However, when the hosts asked how they managed to get permission for this, they gave an evasive answer and categorically refused to show any documents, saying it was a commercial secret and no one else's business. Still, the Far East residents are very curious about this; after all, Far East aviators have been trying to get the Department of Air Transportation to issue them permits to conduct such work in neighboring China so their helicopters would not stand idle. Due to sharply increased fuel prices, which also means higher tariffs and higher charges, few in Russia are willing to employ their services. Of course, earning foreign currency for the needs of the enterprise and the kray is not bad either. [video shows interview with I.P. Yelanskiy, deputy commander of the Vladivostok aviation enterprise]

[Begin Yelanskiy recording] Of course we feel hurt having so many helicopters and virtually no work. And here they are, working right under our noses. They flew their helicopters across the entire country. From the economic point of view, all this is questionable. It took 10 million [rubles] to just get the helicopters here. Therefore, some major questions are aroused here. Why are these helicopters in our rayon? [end recording]

Agreement Reached With Poland on Building Pipeline

OW2403212593 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2019 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Russia and Poland have agreed to start construction of the Polish segment of the Yamal-West Europe transcontinental gas pipeline.

Two pipelines with an annual throughput of 26 bn [billion] cubic meters of gas each will deliver the Yamal gas across Belarus and Poland to Germany. Polish consumers will take up 14 bn cubic meters annually (initially, 3 bn). Consequently, on the German border the total throughput will be 38 bn cubic meters a year. The cost of the project is estimated at $3 bn.

An agreement in principle on construction of the pipeline was reached this week in negotiations between a Russian delegation headed by Oleg Davydov, first deputy foreign trade minister and Rem Vyakhirev, chairman of the Gazprom joint-stock society (the chief producer and supplier of natural gas in Russia) and a Polish delegation headed by Waclaw Niewiarowski, industry minister.

The two sides agreed on the sites where the Polish segment of the pipeline will start and end, on the supplies to the construction, and the amounts of natural gas to be delivered to Poland.

Moscow To Open Consulates in Liepaja, Daugavpils

OW2503111693 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1053 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] On Wednesday [24 March] the Latvian Government accepted the proposal of the Russian Foreign Ministry to open a consulate general in Liepaja and a consulate in Daugavpils. The Latvian Foreign Ministry was instructed to sign an agreement with its counterpart in Russia on the opening of a consulate general in St. Petersburg and a consulate in Pskov.

Intelligence Service Continues Foreign Activities

LD2403211193 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1507 GMT 24 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Aleysey Agureyev]

[Text] Moscow, 24 March—Russia's Foreign Intelligence Service [FIS] is ceasing to use journalism as a cover for its agents, but this cannot be done overnight. This was stated by Yuriy Kobaladze, head of the bureau for links with the public and the mass media of the Russian FIS, at a meeting with the participants of the international conference which is now in its third day in the headquarters of ITAR-TASS. The conference has been organized by the Russia-United States Public Foundation, the Foundation for the Development of Economic Reform, and the International Center of Civil Administration (U.S.).

Today the conference held an "itinerant session" in the FIS press bureau, where the journalists and editors taking part in the seminar were able to put questions to spokesmen of this department.

Kobaladze said that in recent times over 30 FIS residencies all over the world have been shut down. "However," he noted in reply to a question from ITAR-TASS, "we have never said and we do not say that we intend to wind up our intelligence work including our work in the United States; and the United States does just the same. Those in the United States whose job it is to know about the activities of our intelligence service know that we really have reduced our activities, but this does not mean that our effectiveness has decreased." However, it was

noted at the meeting that "Russian agents do not do anything in the United States that U.S. agents would not do in Russia."

"The fact that communism has collapsed does not mean that Russia does not have long-term national interests; and we are defending them by all ways and means which we are legally entitled to use," Kobaladze concluded.

Speaking about the political situation which pertains in Russia at present, Yu. Kobaladze stated: "In the not too distant past the security services were used to carry out functions which were not germane to them. Therefore, we have done everything to have it enshrined in law that the intelligence service is not the instrument of any party and that it is not a law enforcement body. We consider that our only task is to provide objective information to the Russian leadership, the president, the parliament, and the state structures."

The Russia-United States Foundation was set up in January this year on the initiative of ITAR-TASS, the International Association of Heads of Enterprises, and chief editors of Russia's leading mass media. Academician Aleksandr Yakovlev has been elected its president.

Aftermath of Presidential Rule

Kostikov Comments on Yeltsin-Khasbulatov Meeting

OW2403183393 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1825 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] An "IZVESTIYA" reporter asked Vyacheslav Kostikov, press secretary of the Russian president, to tell more about the meeting Boris Yeltsin had in the Kremlin Wednesday [24 March] with Ruslan Khasbulatov, Chairman of the Supreme Soviet, Valeriy Zorkin, Chairman of the Constitutional Court, and Premier Viktor Chernomyrdin. Kostikov said that Khasbulatov had made "ultimatum-like demands in a rude manner" to the president who "resolutely and firmly rejected them." Kostikov declined to specify the demands. Earlier, immediately after the Kremlin meeting, Kostikov described the posture of the parliament and congress leaders as the desire not to stabilize the situation in the country but to remove a legitimately elected president and make power available to the forces of revenge and totalitarian restoration.

Says Yeltsin Prepared for Further Negotiations

LD2403215493 Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian 1800 GMT 24 Mar 93

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] Presidential Press Secretary Vyacheslav Kostikov has spoken in detail about Boris Yeltsin's position at today's quadripartite [Yeltsin, Chernomyrdin, Khasbulatov, and Zorkin] meeting.

[Begin recording] [Kostikov] The president tried yet again, by toning down certain formulations and proposing realistic ways, to bring about a possible compromise with the Supreme Soviet. Specifically, I may suppose that it was a question of the inexpediency of convening a Congress of People's Deputies. The Supreme Soviet decision to convene an extraordinary congress is based on the controversial and biased appraisals of the Constitutional Court, which, even without studying the president's decree, shed its impartiality by its premature conclusions.

As you know, the decree was only issued today. It is distressing to see that the Supreme Soviet is deliberately, through its hasty acts, pushing the country into confrontations. Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin is full of determination to firmly and consistently seek the stabilization of the constitutional situation within the country.

Proceeding from this decree—published today, the decree issued today—he has also agreed to meet a number of people so as to work out some form of joint position. As far as I know, from the reaction of Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin, it has not yet proven possible to work out such a joint position. At the same time, on behalf of the president, I am authorized to say that the president is prepared both for a new series of meetings and for a constructive dialogue with the leaders of political parties, with the actual political parties, and with all those healthy forces that have an interest in extricating the country from crisis.

[Correspondent Igor Minayev] In Vyacheslav Kostikov's opinion, the decision to convene the congress was based on some ephemeral document, since there was still no official text of the decree. The president's decree differs considerably in meaning from his television broadcast. Many formulations have been modified. As Vyacheslav Kostikov pointed out, the decree may well become the basis for the search for compromise. It resolves that, at the same time as a vote of confidence in the head of state, a further vote should be taken on a new draft constitution.

[Unidentified journalist] What specific Constitution is in question here?

[Kostikov] As far as I know, the president is prepared to take as a basis the draft constitution that was drawn up by the Congress' Constitutional Commission. The president would, of course, propose that his own additions, his own amendments, be made to the draft constitution approved by the congress, so as to designate precisely the presidential powers and the boundaries of interaction with other branches of power. [end recording]

Yeltsin, Rutskoy Reportedly Hold Meeting

OW2503115193 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1133 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] President Boris Yeltsin and Vice-President Aleksandr Rutskoy are now having a meeting in Moscow, a well-informed source in the Kremlin told INTERFAX.

According to the source, it was Rutskoy who asked for the meeting.

The presidential press office could not confirm or deny this report.

Yeltsin To Take Part in Congress, Speak 26 Mar

LD2503123493 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1207 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Report by ITAR-TASS correspondent Ivan Ivanov]

[Text] Moscow, 25 Mar—"According to preliminary information, the president will take part in the Russian Congress of People's Deputies tomorrow," Vladimir Shumeyko, the first deputy prime minister of Russia, announced today at the session of the presidium of the Russian Federation Council of Ministers. Boris Yeltsin is preparing to speak at the Congress tomorrow, he said.

Vladimir Shumeyko added that the president will make an appeal to the citizens of Russia on television this evening "in which he will set forth his position."

The deputy prime minister also said that none of the government leaders have been sent an invitation to participate in the Congress. "Therefore, the question as to whether or not we will take part in the work of the Congress remains open," he said, expressing the view that members of the government, as representatives of the executive authority "should take part in the work of the Congress at which issues concerning executive power are to be examined."

The first deputy prime minister called upon members of the government not to leave Moscow either today or tomorrow so that they might be "ready to take part in the Congress."

Supreme Soviet Continues To Meet on Current Crisis

Khasbulatov Reports on Meeting With Yeltsin

LD2403161993 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1430 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Remarks by Supreme Soviet Chairman Ruslan Khasbulatov to the afternoon session of the proceedings of the Russian Supreme Soviet in the Grand Kremlin Palace in Moscow—live]

[Text] Esteemed colleagues, let us continue our work. I am told that you broke off the session without adopting all of the resolution. In theory, we need not return to it. The decision on the congress has been made. It is up to the congress to finalize its agenda.

I am also told that you would like to hear about our conversation. On the whole, I have to say, this is not something I enjoy. These days, we all have to publicly explain after a meeting what was said. This will not be easy, but I will be only one side doing the explaining.

I will tell you. You are all fully aware—no less than I am—how difficult the situation is in the country. All of us bear an enormous responsibility for a solution to the political crisis. Of course, I, as the chairman of the Supreme Soviet—and I think you will support me in this—should do everything I can to ensure that these issues are resolved without conflict, but in strict compliance with the principles and clauses of the Constitution, with constitutionality, and with existing laws.

For that reason, it was, of course, a quite lawful meeting of the prime minister, the chairman of the Constitutional Court, the president, and the chairman of the Supreme Soviet. We spent nearly—not nearly, but just over—an hour and a half in what was, of course, a very serious discussion. My viewpoint was that I should at least explain how I see the situation from where I am.

I think the situation is such that following the Constitutional Court's decision, the basis for the legitimacy of both the presidential power, and generally state power as a whole, is speedily eroding, of course. A delegitimization of presidential power is taking place, and whether you like it or not, the provisions laid down in Article 121-6 are coming into play. [Article 121-6 provides for immediately stripping the president of his powers if he acts in breach of the Constitution by overstepping his powers; by, for instance, attempting to dissolve Congress or the parliament]

Reaction from the regions, the reaction of the republic, and many other processes in the Russian Federation testify to this. Looking at the situation from these positions, it is not only the Supreme Soviet as an institution of power that is interested in convening the Congress as soon as possible, but also society as a whole, and, objectively speaking, the president too—in order to solve this most complicated dilemma as soon as possible. So this is how I outlined the situation as I saw it—along these lines, but naturally in more detail.

The next item. We discussed the possibility, as it were... [changes thought] at least I also set forth the issue concerning a government of national accord.

Next we discussed the issue of the status of presidential decrees. I reminded Boris Nikolayevich how only very recently we used to shake all over. I remember once making a joke about going to work in the morning when I was always thinking with awe about what other decree from President Gorbachev was awaiting us. Now, however, the number of these decrees has increased ten-fold. Unfortunately, they have become even less prepared in legal terms.

It was suggested that, instead of a poll, we might revert to the idea of pre-term elections to be held simultaneously for people's deputies and the president. Frankly speaking, this would probably be in the interests of the people, who are fed up with all federal authorities, with each one separately and all of them together.

The next item discussed was the coordinated law regulating the electronic mass media—you know what I am talking about. It was a decree on the liquidation of the Federal Information Center, which—as we have said bluntly—stirs up civil war. It quite unashamedly stirs up civil war in the country. I think that those people should not cherish any illusions that they would go unpunished in the future. After all, someone ought to bear responsibility for the disintegration of our fatherland, for the disintegration of the state.

As for television, Ostankino and various Mr. Kiselevs [reference to Yevgeniy Kiselev, presenter of Sunday Itogi program, who angered the Supreme Soviet with his program on Sunday, 21 March], they stop at no form of falsehood. Surely this is wrong? Surely every citizen should have some degree of conscience, some kind of barrier of decency?

We had two decisions of the Congress of People's Deputies on the matter of the elimination of the institution of presidential representatives in the regions. Boris Nikolayevich said: I would, in fact, be ready to eliminate it, but Mikhail Alekseyevich Mityukov [chairman of Supreme Soviet Committee on Legislation] approved my last decree, saying it was all correct.

I do not know. Evidently, Mikhail Alekseyevich has the right to revoke the decisions of the Congress of People's Deputies. I do not think this is really the case, however.

The next point was the people who should bear responsibility for the preparation of unconstitutional acts, including this notorious speech.

The eighth point was the campaign to intimidate and discredit the Constitutional Court and its chairman and the Supreme Soviet and its leaders.

Those were the issues we discussed. Frankly, I had hoped that some issues—at least the main ones—would somehow be settled before 26 March, before the start of the Congress. However, I, in any event, feel that this was a positive meeting. It fully delineated the picture that we have now, and, it seems to me that it was useful, because, I repeat, in my mind, Boris Nikolayevich is evaluating the situation that has arisen in the country not quite correctly, and, indeed in the corps of deputies. And, in all this very serious, and not very noble, work that is going on among our people—among the deputies—I think that each of us should do his duty and be true to his Constitution on which we have been working for three years already, true to his electors, and true to his fatherland. And I call on everybody not to take part in any games and so on.

So probably the belief that some section of the deputies will give into something and, equally, these attempts to frighten us with various demonstrations—including appeals by former citizens of ours who have gone abroad and who now, in order to put pressure on us, are being gathered together again, according to many reports—these are all pointless. These are the wrong methods. That, in brief, is roughly what we spoke about. Thank you.

Shall we now begin discussing this decision, or shall we leave it at what we have already adopted? [voices heard from the hall; Khasbulatov responds to voices from the floor]

No. What? They have finished. I proposed that prior to the Congress. We should. Yes, it is a good point. You are right.

I assure you that I personally will do everything I can before the congress to find some kind of normal base, because it is quite clear that this was a blatant error. Naturally, Boris Nikolayevich probably believed people who were not very conscientious. He made an appeal like that. So, we shall try for all that, to return the president to the field of the Constitution within the framework of the Constitution that is in force. Incidentally, I said that there is no president outside the Constitution, just as no official, no state body exists outside of the Constitution. How can there be a constitutional president outside of the Constitution? How can a constitutional president struggle against the most important institutions of state power? It is simply inconceivable.

Therefore, we will, of course, endeavor to resolve these disputes before the Congress begins on 26 March, so that we can indeed offer the congress some kind of reasonable alternative. Honestly, we must all be ashamed as well as bitter, I think.

That is how the meeting ended. There's nothing more to say about it. I have not withheld anything. [shouting is heard from the floor]

Well, friends, let us not debate it any longer. I cannot say any more, and it is not because I have hidden anything. You asked me to explain, and I did so. So that is all. Let us continue our discussions.

Where is.... [changes thought] Esteemed friends, that is my reaction. I will not say that. Release me, please. All right?

The talks were useful and necessary. Despite everything, they were, I think, quite useful. [shouting is heard] That is all.

Congress Agenda Approved; Yeltsin Invited

LD2403155293 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1525 GMT 24 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS parliamentary correspondent Ivan Novikov]

[Text] Moscow, 24 Mar—The Russian Federation Supreme Soviet is submitting the following issue to the Ninth Extraordinary Congress of People's Deputies: "On urgent measures to preserve the constitutional system of the Russian Federation." A decision on this was adopted today at a joint session of the chambers.

The parliament invited the Russian President Boris Yeltsin to attend the congress, which is being convened on 26 March in Moscow.

Yeltsin's Message on 'Constitutionality'

LD2403174793 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1634 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Text] Moscow, 24 Mar (ITAR-TASS)—The Russian presidential press service has published the text of Russian President Boris Yeltsin's message to the Russian Supreme Soviet:

Message from the Russian President to the Russian Supreme Soviet on Constitutionality

The Russian president is following with alarm the growth of the constitutional crisis in the country, particularly regarding the most recent Russian Supreme Soviet and Russian Constitutional Court decisions. The Russian president does not intend to go into details on these decisions in this memorandum. The president is proceeding from the fact that the supreme bodies of representative authority and constitutional control can and must achieve legal and moral purity in their own resolutions if for their part they want to dispute the constitutionality and correctness of the measures being undertaken by the head of executive authority. The Russian president's concern in this instance is linked to a more fundamental issue. It concerns the nature of Russian constitutionality—which is coming into being—and the dangers to which it is being subjected today, as well as the authorities' attitude toward it.

I believe that it is essential that the present considerations be brought to the notice of the Russian Supreme Soviet to avoid an incorrect understanding of my position on this issue and any steps that might follow.

1. Abandoning constitutionality: On 26 February 1993, I asked the Russian Supreme Soviet to note the Russian Constitutional Court's annual message on the state of constitutional legality in the country. I had already addressed the Constitutional Court chairman, urging him to accelerate preparation of the annual message. To my great regret, the Constitutional Court reacted to my worry over the growing depth of the constitutional crisis in the country in a manner which was largely formal and prepared an ordinary account of work completed. However, the Congress of People's Deputies acted even more formally, redirecting the message to the Supreme Soviet and allocating no more than a few minutes to the joint declaration on the state of constitutional legality. Surely deputies do not believe that such a complex issue as constitutionality in the country can be dealt with in a matter of minutes? I recommend that the people's deputies remember the forgotten constitutional message and use it as the starting point for their hearings on this or other anticonstitutional acts.

Common sense tells us that actions must be taken in sequence. In jumping legal steps on the way to a cherished goal in the conflict of authorities, you are taking upon yourselves a share of the blame for the collapse of constitutionality. I ask people's deputies to remember that the people must receive an account of the results of the examination of the messages that have been sent to you.

2. The instability of constitutionality: The country's constitutional condition is quite unstable today. It is impermissible to turn a blind eye to this. The words "constitutionality", "constitutional legality," or "constitutional control" mean only so much and are being increasingly interpreted according to the political situation. But what is their correlation, their procedural interrelation, their legal and fair framework? Regrettably, neither the Supreme Soviet nor the Constitutional Court ponder these questions. Similarly, there is no answer to the main question: What is the constitutionality of the constitution from the point of view of legal justice or just legality? At the same time, claims to the effect that some actions, decisions, and even words are anticonstitutional are being made with unparalleled ease. I strongly doubt that all the speeches of the leaders of the Supreme Soviet and the Constitutional Court strictly correspond to high constitutional standards.

It is no secret to anybody that our constitutional basis is contradictory already at the level of constitutional axioms. The Supreme Soviet has dozens of conclusions by experts and their own appraisals on this account regarding the present-day Russian Constitution.

A contradictory basis inevitably leads to contradictory evaluations. One and the same act can be deemed both constitutional and nonconstitutional and even anticonstitutional, and all three verdicts will be impeccably proved from the point of view of correctly mentioning the numbers of articles, paragraphs, and references to the constitution currently in force. But from the point of view of law as justice, only one decision of the three will be correct.

Are the deputies convinced that they are entirely in the right? And will not their mistake result in a tragedy for Russia?

3. Constitutional mistakes: A durable, well-calculated legal edifice cannot be erected on a controversial constitutional foundation. Therefore, there are scores, if not hundreds, of decisions of all branches of power which are wrong and are being or can be appealed against.

Russian statehood is only just being shaped. It would be a good thing to have an irreproachable constitution, perfectly thought-out decisions, and power bodies acting without mistakes. But where could they come from today or even tomorrow? They are a thing of the day after tomorrow. Therefore, the right to make mistakes should be recognized and machinery for correcting them created instead of launching a process of self-destruction of the constitutional system. We are not talking about who has made more or fewer mistakes. The right to make mistakes should not be replaced by actions based on un-law [ne-pravo]. This is what we are talking about. It is this un-law and not the army or the security service that is the actual force already interfering in current developments, destroying constitutionality, and burying, like volcanic lava, the democracy which has started to emerge peacefully and constitutionally.

4. A transitional constitutional period: The Russian Soviet Federal Socialist Republic gave way constitutionally to the Russian Federation. In this way, we entered a transitional constitutional period. The legitimacy of the bodies of power previously elected must, as a minimum, be confirmed. This confirmation must and should be carried out by applying to the supreme arbiter, namely the people. They have remained true and at one with themselves.

The vote of confidence which I decided to go for first, this formula gives the nation strength to uphold its true nature, its own "ego" ["Ya"]—that is, to be loyal to itself and to its choice.

At one and the same time, I am ready to propose a new draft constitution because I believe that delaying its adoption is extremely dangerous for Russian democracy. I do not rule out the possibility that the new constitution will subsequently be added to and approved by a constitutional assembly or a new federal parliament.

Today we have a transitional, interim constitutional order, directly following on from the previous socialist order, which is the cradle of the new constitutional order.

This bridge between the past and the future is weak for the moment. Delay is stealing the ground from beneath it. The bridge could collapse while the powers have their showdown.

The vote on the new constitution will take place on 25 April. I would warn all bodies of state authority, public movements, and officials against doing anything to threaten stability during the period of constitutional transition.

5. Constitutional control: Russian constitutional control is being weakened by unacceptable involvement in the political struggle, by haste bordering on "constitutional impropriety," and by a diminishing of its authority in the eyes of the public and from the point of view of public morale. The Constitutional Court should act calmly and correctly and support constitutional stability without caving in. Nascent Russian democracy needs a judicial authority standing high on guard for the law. It is not worth damaging its prestige.

I would hope that the Russian Congress of People's Deputies, as the organ of power that elected the Russian Constitutional Court judges, recommends that the court explain openly to the people what its role is in the current constitutional crisis.

Time, by its own force, will inevitably turn Russia into a new, constitutional power and will resolve the question of the nature of the new system, of the next constitution, a question to which the answer is currently so vague because of the confrontation between authorities, a struggle for power, a struggle that is, in essence, a political struggle, which, however, not infrequently takes on a legalistic and, at times, a pseudolegal aspect. I warn against creating constitutional illusions for the people, against giving a constitutional form to a lack of content, against creating a semblance of constitutionality.

I give notice that I, as Russian president, remain the guarantor of constitutionality and will defend it against encroachments, against being held in contempt, and against being insulted.

Russian President B. Yeltsin

24 March 1993

Yeltsin Message on Constitution Disregarded

LD2503094193

[Editorial Report] Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 0800 GMT on 25 March carries a 3.5 minute report by correspondent Aleksandr Ruvinskiy from the Russian parliament. Reception is good.

Ruvinskiy begins by saying that registration for the Ninth Extraordinary Congress of People's Deputies will be held between 1000 and 2100 today at the House of Soviets of the Russia Federation. At the start of the session, he reports, Deputy Lev Ponomarev attempted to add an item to the agenda:

Ponomarev says: "Today, we received the president's message on constitutionality. We cannot pretend—and indeed the chairman has already pretended—that we have not received it. This seems extremely odd. First of all, before the session, we should, the chairman should have said that we had received a message from the president on constitutionality. It is of extreme importance, especially because of tomorrow's Congress. Furthermore, there was an instruction from the Congress—sorry, but please don't interrupt me—there was an instruction from the Congress to the Supreme Soviet to examine a message from the Constitutional Court. So I propose that a significant part of today be devoted to precisely this issue, in spite of the importance of the issues proposed by you, and to ask Zorkin, chairman of the Constitutional Court, to come here to comment on the message from the Constitutional Court to the upcoming Congress on the state of constitutional legality in the country."

Ruvinskiy adds that the proposal was voted down and deputies went on to discuss the draft decision on the setting up of "RTV- Parliament," the television and radio broadcasting channel of the Supreme Soviet; the draft law on the budget system of the Russian Federation; and an additional item included on the agenda, namely the draft of a statement by the Supreme Soviet in support of the Constitutional Court. He also notes that the parliament rejected doubts raised by Deputy Muravev over holding the Ninth Congress in the Kremlin Palace tomorrow and the suggestion that other venues be considered. He concludes by saying that the draft decision on setting up the "RTV-Parliament" channel is now being discussed and has been passed as a basis.

Opposition Leaders on Impeachment Prospects

OW2403204293 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2018 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Leader of the "Communists of Russia" faction Gennadiy Saenko told Interfax on Wednesday that the Supeme Soviet had at last taken "a right decision." He

was commenting on the parliament's resolution to call a special session by the 9th Congress of People's Deputies in Moscow.

Saenko who is also one of the leaders of the opposition Russian Unity alliance in parliament is certain President Yeltsin will be removed from office by the coming Congress.

So is leader of the National Salvation Front Ilya Konstantinov, though saying that the President "will try to hold on to power to the end, stopping nothing short of using force." He believes Yeltsin will be ready to use extreme measures and that the question is one of finding "proper executors." Konstantinov said that if Yeltsin manages to get away scot free, one could say with a fair amount of certainty that "the Congress will be dissolved." He believes the Congress must declare in advance that the results of a Yeltsin-proposed vote of confidence in himself are null and void.

For his part, member of the Reform Alliance faction Lev Ponomarev told Interfax that the coming Congress was unlikely to enlist two thirds of the vote needed to impeach the President.

At the same time, he said that nothing short of resignation by leader of the Russian parliament Ruslan Khasbulatov could help achieve a compromise between the president and the legislature. He said Khasbulatov was the worst mediator between the President and Parliament one could possibly think of.

Yeltsin stands to gain no matter what resolution the Congress will take, chairman of the economic reform commitee Sergey Krasavchenko said.

He said that if the Congress decided on impeachement, the President would go but Russia's economic hardships would remain. Krasavchenko does not believe Vice-President Aleksandr Rutskoy will be able to resolve the country's economic difficulties during a three-month tenure of office until next presidential elections as provided by the constitution. Instead, any changeover at the top may result in chaos and hyperinflation.

Krasavchenko said Yeltsin might stand again as candidate in the next presidential elections after three months and that his chances of winning the vote would be very high.

If there is no impeachment, he said, Yeltsin will also win because of further erosion of Congressional authority, while the President stands the chance of strengthening his hand by winning next month's national confidence vote.

Impeachment 'Unfounded'

OW2403204393 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2018 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Chairman of the Parliamentary Law Committee Mikhail Mityukov says any attempt to impeach the President under the Constitution's Article 121.6 will be legally unfounded.

The Article provides for impeachment in the event of the President's decision to change the country's national-state structure or to dissolve the democratically-elected government bodies.

In an interview with Interfax, Mityukov said the Article did not provide for impeachement of the President by two thirds of the Congressional vote as some deputies contend.

However, he said the Congress may take advange of this loophole to vote Yeltsin out of power by a qualified majority.

The Law Committee Chairman says confrontation will lead nowhere and that a compromise is needed. If the impeachment motion fails, he said, all branches of power must act in line with the Constitution. Mityukov believes the Supreme Soviet should have obliged the President by giving a go ahead to the national ballot on Yeltsin's credibility.

Examines Yeltsin Decree

LD2503101393 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0814 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Report by ITAR-TASS parliamentary correspondent Yuriy Filippov]

[Text] Moscow, 25 Mar—At today's session of the Russian Supreme Soviet, a question arose of why the president's decree "On the activity of executive bodies of power until the crisis of power is overcome," dated 20 March, has a later serial number—379—to decrees signed after that date. The parliament turned down a proposal by Deputy Sergey Baburin on sending the president an inquiry regarding this on behalf of the Supreme Soviet.

However, since the Soviet of Nationalities voted in favor of this proposal, the relevant inquiry will probably be sent to the president on behalf of one of the Supreme Soviet's chambers.

Democratic Deputies: Court Not Impartial

OW2403203893 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2017 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Constitutional Court [CC] and above all its Chairman have assumed political functions alien to its nature and declared their position before having discussed the case. In doing so the CC has become a prejudiced party in the conflict and has discredited itself as the highest constitutional arbiter. This is the essence of a statement made public in Moscow Wednesday by

about 20 people's deputies who are members of different democratic parliamentary groups.

By ignoring the complaints raised in a legally correct manner about flagrant violations of the Constitution and legislation committed by the Congress of People's Deputies, the Supreme Soviet, and its leaders, the CC has abandoned its constitutional and moral duty and betrayed the principle of court impartiality, the statement says.

Formed by one branch of power, the authors of the statement insist, the CC remains dependent on it because both the legislation on the Court and the lifelong service of its members can be revised by the Congress at any time.

The existing Constitution, the statement says, is highly inconsistent and cannot be implemented to the full in the climate of a political crisis. In effect, the situation at hand now cannot be resolved along formal legal lines. In this context the presidential appeal to the people of March 20 is fully consistent with the overriding principles of the Constitution such as sovereignty of the power of the people and protection of human rights and freedoms.

"We highly appreciate the honest desire of President Yeltsin to restore the respect for state authority by addressing the people and call on the citizens of Russia to support his actions which are now the sole guarantee of political stability, democracy, and continuation of democratic reforms," the deputies conclude.

Decree Referring Yeltsin's Edict to Court Published

PM2403144993 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 24 Mar 93 First Edition p 3

[Russian Federation Supreme Soviet decree No. 4648-1 dated 21 March 1993: "On the Russian Federation President's 20 March 1993 Address to Russian Citizens"]

[Text] Having examined the Russian Federation president's 20 March 1993 address to Russian citizens, and assessing his actions as an encroachment on the constitutional foundations of Russian statehood, the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet decrees that:

1. In accordance with Article 74 of the RSFSR law "On the RSFSR Constitutional Court," the Russian Federation Constitutional Court shall be asked to verify the constitutionality of the Russian Federation president's actions and decisions in connection with his 20 March 1993 address.

2. It shall be proposed that the Russian Federation general prosecutor examine the question of the responsibility of all officials who took part in preparing the Russian Federation president's address.

3. The Russian Federation Government and organs of state power in republics within the Russian Federation and in krays, oblasts, the autonomous oblast, autonomous okrugs, and cities of federal status shall take the necessary measures to maintain law and order, ensure the operational running of the economy, and protect the rights and freedoms of the individual and the citizen.

[Signed] R.I. Khasbulatov, chairman of the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet
Moscow, House of the Soviets of Russia
21 March 1993
No. 4648-1

'RTV-Parliament' To Air Ninth Congress Proceedings

LD2503111393 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1010 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Report by ITAR-TASS parliamentary correspondent Ivan Novikov]

[Text] Moscow, 25 Mar—The Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation has adopted a decision to institute a parliamentary television and radio program. This has been done in accordance with the instruction of the Eighth Congress of People's Deputies. The decision adopted today at the joint session of the chambers stresses that the "RTV-Parliament" program has been created with the aim of providing up-to-the-minute coverage of the activities of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation.

The idea of setting up a "parallel television" was not received unequivocally. In particular, Deputy Georgiy Zadonskiy called it "inventing the bicycle" since the "Parliamentary Herald" program already exists on Russian Television. He was supported by his colleague Igor Zbronzhko who was opposed in principle to "air-time being divided up by the representative organs of power."

Mikhail Fedotov, minister of press and information, spoke during the debate, although he was not given the floor for a long time, under the pretext that, in this instance, he was not a representative of the president. When he was, eventually, given the floor, the minister reasonably reminded the legislators that members of the government have the right to speak in parliament—on the basis of Article 16 of the law on the Council of Ministers, which the deputies themselves had adopted.

Mikhail Fedotov noted that the Ministry of Press and Information had taken part in drawing up the draft decision and supported the idea of creating a parliamentary television and radio channel and was prepared to take part in providing backup for its activities. "However, we are worried by questions connected with the technological and financial provision for the program," he stressed. He outlined several possible variants for making these provisions, in particular the setting up of a television and radio editorial center within the press center of the Supreme Soviet and another one of setting

up a parliamentary editorial center subordinated directly to the press center within the framework of the All-Russian Television and Radio Company.

However, the directorate of the "RTV-Parliament" program is being set up with its own charter and supervisory council. The all- Russian State Television and Radio Broadcasting Company has been instructed to allocate air time from March of this year to the Supreme Soviet on television and radio channels within the limits of the volume of broadcasting confirmed for 1993. As a result of the discussion of the question about "parallel television," the approximate estimate of the expenditure on this channel, $1.8 million dollars and 400 million rubles—disappeared from the draft.

Subcommittee Chief Discusses Army, Crisis

LD2403141293 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1200 GMT 24 Mar 93

[By Vyacheslav Baranov from the "Armed Forces and Society" program]

[Text] In light of events in recent days following Russian President Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin's address to the people, the issue of the possible participation of the power structures—above all, the Army—in resolving domestic political conflicts is once again being raised. It appears that some have found Defense Minister Pavel Grachev's recent speech on preserving Army neutrality in political disputes not very convincing. In that case, what is the real guarantee that calm will prevail within Army ranks? How possible is this? Correspondent Vyacheslav Morozov posed these questions to Aleksey Yuriyevich Tsarev, chairman of the Russian Supreme Soviet's security and defense subcommittee:.

[Begin recording] [Tsarev] Unfortunately, there is no guarantee that servicemen will not be involved in political activity. The Russian law on the status of servicemen gives no such guarantees. The off-duty serviceman has the right to participate in apolitical rallies, meetings, and street processions. Our committee insisted that servicemen be restricted in certain rights granted in the constitution. However, the wording of the article does not prohibit; rather, it virtually copies the Constitution. I think that we will be making the appropriate amendments to the law because the involvement of servicemen in the political struggle is fraught with the most terrible consequences.

We are monitoring the situation and know that, so far, officers want to serve their people and their state. If an officer decides to engage in politics, he has to relinquish his military service. The law should encompass the defense minister's right to dismiss such officers from military service.

[Morozov] You said that if the Army splits, the most terrible consequences could ensue. Can one forecast such a thing today? What can protect the Army from a split? What structures within the Army?

[Tsarev] There is no such danger right now. However, if the political boat is rocked, then some servicemen might not be able to restrain themselves. As for what could be a guarantee, the security bodies need to make a contribution here too, because this is a matter of the state's security. I am not talking about some kind of political investigation, but if there is such a law then the security bodies must promote the implementation of this law. We know that in many countries in the world, people who are members of political parties are not allowed into the armed forces.

[Morozov] How stable and calm is the Army right now?

[Tsarev] If you are referring to political emotions, then I do not think they are overwhelming the armed forces. There are many other problems which have to be settled, and we will be settling them with the Defense Ministry. [end recording]

Zorkin Comments on Constitutional Crisis

PM2403203393 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 25 Mar 93 First Edition p 1

[Interview with Valeriy Zorkin, chairman of the Russian Federation Constitutional Court, by Inna Muravyeva on 24 March; place not given; carried under the "Opinion" rubric: "Political and Social Figures Discuss the President's Appeal. Valeriy Zorkin Hopes That Politicians Will Have Sufficient Wisdom"—first three paragraphs are introduction]

[Text] The day before yesterday "Vesti" disseminated a report that the chairman of the Constitutional Court had passed the text of the court's ruling to the president during the funeral service [of the president's mother]. This monstrous lie is aimed at discrediting one man and provoking sympathy for another.

In recent days the Constitutional Court has been living in a state of extreme tension. As is well known, judges worked on the elaboration of the ruling on the president's appeal all night long.

Yesterday, 24 March, as early as 0800 hours, virtually all court members were already at their workplaces. At 0915 hours Constitutional Court Chairman Valeriy Zorkin held a brief conference. Several minutes later the judges set off for the Supreme Soviet session.

ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA's correspondent asked Valeriy Zorkin:

"In what mood are you traveling to the White House?"

[Zorkin] I am going there in an optimistic mood. If there is such conflict and strife in the country, politicians should make up their minds; state figures should sit down at the negotiating table and finally reach agreement.

Surely we will not continue to tear the country apart? Incidentally, it cannot of course be ruled out that the

subjects of the Russian Federation will say: "What is going on in the center? Let us get together and save Russia, and let them fight among themselves."

[Muravyeva] Right now there is a lot of talk that, by its ruling, the Constitutional Court has launched the mechanism for the impeachment of the president.

[Zorkin] People are saying all sorts of things. It is even being said that the Constitutional Court is in Khasbulatov's pocket. Some other words are also being uttered....

But the president's address contains the phrase: "I have made a decision, I have signed an edict." Surely the court is obliged to react to this text?

No, the Constitutional Court has not and does not set itself the goal of dismissing the president or any such goals.

Right now very much depends on the steps which the president takes, and, of course, the steps which the Supreme Soviet and the Congress take.

I think that, all the same, everyone will have sufficient wisdom....

Impeachment Supporters Reportedly Have Too Few Votes

LD2403224693 Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian 2123 GMT 24 Mar 93

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[Excerpts] The Russian parliament has adopted a decision to convene another Congress of Deputies on Friday. [passage omitted]

Yeltsin's unexpected meeting today with parliamentary head Khasbulatov, Constitutional Court head Zorkin, and Prime Minister Chernomyrdin was unable to remove the tension. According to the POSTFACTUM agency, Zorkin and Khasbulatov decided to insist on a harsh version: either the president publicly renounces his television appeal or else the Congress will be held. [passage omitted]

Many people consider that at the Congress the supporters of impeachment will not gather a sufficient number of votes. According to some reports, yesterday they held a special conference in private in order to discuss their tactics, but there was a microphone in the hall which had not been turned off and journalists heard one of the opposition leaders complaining that they had 600 votes, whereas they need 694 for impeachment. [passage omitted]

Deputy Sees No Impeachment; New Draft Constitution Upcoming

MK2503111493 Moscow KURANTY in Russian 25 Mar 93 p 4

[Interview with Russian People's Deputy V.V. Volkov, deputy leader of the president's administration, by Pavel Zakharov, under general heading: "The People Will Not Stay Silent"—place and date not given]

[Text] [Zakharov] Vyacheslav Vasilyevich, the political situation in our country is changing almost hourly. How would you characterize it today?

[Volkov] If we proceed from the premise that the Constitutional Court deems the president's appeal unconstitutional, this will provide a legal basis for impeaching the president. Thus, we should assume that the Congress of People's Deputies will be convened in the very near future.

But the Congress, for all its conservatism, will never vote for impeachment. Whatever Khasbulatov and his entourage do there, there will be no impeachment at the Congress. Consequently, the president must take the path that he has chosen. Boldly make contact with the people and with public organizations, and conduct a poll together with the government.

[Zakharov] And then?

[Volkov] I do not doubt that the president will secure a majority of votes. The draft constitution proposed by him and the new law on elections will be approved by popular vote. Then the president will issue his edict bringing into force the constitution and the new law on elections and will mount a campaign to prepare for elections on this basis.

[Zakharov] Does this mean that the president has already prepared the draft constitution?

[Volkov] Yes. He is chairman of the Constitutional Commission. Approximately 10 drafts of the constitution were published in the past. Now this is all being generalized. It is possible to state confidently that in two or three days the president will submit his own draft constitution and the new law on elections.

[Zakharov] Today there is a lot of talk to the effect that the people are not in the mood for voting, that they are struggling to survive, that they do not give a damn about anything, and so forth. How would you forecast the poll's outcome?

[Volkov] Whatever lethargic state the people might be in, when acute questions are raised they rise up and decide what the state system must be. It seems to me that 70 to 75 percent of the voters will participate in the upcoming vote, even though very little time is left. Of these, 60 to 70 percent will vote for the president.

Incidentally, the cranking up of events by the Supreme Soviet and the Constitutional Court will only help to arouse the people from their lethargy.

I am in a very calm and optimistic frame of mind—which is what I wish for all KURANTY readers. The chief thing is not to panic.

But the newspaper's editorial board must be vigilant. You and I must understand that an anticonstitutional coup is taking place by way of a united front being formed by the legislature and the judiciary.

Poltoranin Criticizes Rutskoy, Zorkin

MK2303142093 Moscow MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS in Russian 23 Mar 93 p 1

[Interview with Mikhail Poltoranin, head of Russian Presidential Information Center, by Mikhail Gurevich; date and place not given: "Mikhail Poltoranin: 'Come On, Russia! Think!'"]

[Text] [Poltoranin] Through your newspaper I want to express my condolences to Boris Nikolayevich. I knew Klavdiya Vasilyevna—a wonderful woman who went through an awful lot in her time. In 1987 she and I went to the hospital where Boris Nikolayevich stayed after the October plenum, and she kept on telling me: "There is something about the color of his face that I do not like. Help me transfer him to another hospital." Klavdiya Vasilyevna herself was feeling poorly at the time, but she nursed her son like a small boy. She told me the story of her life: She was of fine stock, with strong roots.

[Gurevich] It is surprising: The president wants to put this question to the referendum: "Do you have confidence in me?"—but he is accused of establishing a dictatorial regime of personal power.

[Poltoranin] Yeltsin has taken the only possible step in this lawless situation. He has done nothing anticonstitutional, apart from courageously putting himself and his post at stake in order to preserve—or establish—order in Russia. He says to the regions: See this anarchy, this muddy wave of breaking the constitution and breaking the foundations of democracy which began at the Sixth Congress and finally strengthened at the Eighth. This will lead to no good. This is no time for ambitions, for personal interests. If you have confidence, this means we will go along together. Come on, think, Russia.

[Gurevich] How do you rate the behavior of Yeltsin's opponents—Rutskoy, Khasbulatov, Zorkin?

[Poltoranin] Let us investigate the term "the president's entourage." The image is specially created to give the impression that the president does not think for himself and that devils are sitting behind his back, prompting him to take unwise actions. Khasbulatov and his company picked up this term.

Who makes up the president's most immediate entourage? Vice President Rutskoy is on his right hand. Security Council Chairman Skokov on his left. His first assistant is Ilyushin, and his advisers are Stankevich, Lakhova, and others. This is his most immediate entourage. If we speak of a leak of documents, then we must also speak of this entourage. If somebody believes that Yeltsin is being kept from meetings with journalists, it is also necessary to speak of this entourage. But, in principle, Rutskoy was the first to employ this wording.

[Gurevich] And yet it was Yeltsin who brought Rutskoy, Khasbulatov, and Skokov to the summit of power.

[Poltoranin] It is always like this: Do not expect anything good from someone for whom you have done a lot of good. Rutskoy believes in all innocence that, if someone has become a chief, others are obliged to think for him. I know that in Rutskoy's case precisely his entourage makes the policy, not he himself. I have already had an opportunity—more than one—to acquaint myself with his entourage, particularly when property in Russia was being divided up after the failure of the August putsch. I know what kind of entourage this is, why they need Rutskoy, and which way they are pushing him. But, unlike the vice president, Yeltsin thinks for himself and can himself analyze, forecast, and make decisions.

[Gurevich] A doubt arose more than a year ago: How can the vice president be in opposition to the president? Can the vice president's powers not be terminated ahead of schedule?

[Poltoranin] I believe it is possible to put two questions to the referendum: "Do you have confidence in the president?" and "Do you have confidence in the vice president?" Let these questions be separate from each other. When Yeltsin went into the presidential election, he could have taken even a pail of kerosene with him as vice president—they would have elected him just the same. I believe that Gavriil Popov should have been taken as the vice president, and there was talk of this.

Now about Zorkin. The idea of the Constitutional Court is a noble idea of the democrats. Back in April 1989 we—the Moscow group of USSR people's deputies—met and discussed the future of Russia. Andrey Dmitriyevich Sakharov was still alive. We spoke of the need to institute the Constitutional Court—this independent instrument of power, where the country's best people embodying the conscience of Russia would gather. Any citizen could turn to it. Yes, we succeeded in creating this forum. But how did its substance turn out? It was like filling a crystal vase with sour brine. The wild discrepancy between form and substance resulted in this institution of power discrediting itself. Mr. Zorkin bears personal responsibility for this discrediting of a democratic idea—he has gotten too involved in politics. His involvement both with Khasbulatov and with all the destructive forces standing behind the speaker is clear to everyone today. Zorkin's bustling activity staggers me and grates upon me.

[Gurevich] The judges were elected for life....

[Poltoranin] I do not believe that he will stay there long. The constitution will change, and there will be other judges—he is clinging on and carrying out these maneuvers in order to leave everything as it is: anarchy, the erosion of power, Russia's slide toward political and economic chaos. Here too it is possible to speak of Zorkin's entourage: those judges who realized that, in adopting the decision on the "CPSU case" (despite dozens of volumes of documents), they were fanning into life almost extinguished torches. Nevertheless, they did so.

[Gurevich] What, in your opinion, will be the president's next steps?

[Poltoranin] Russia supports the president now. Russia has seen who is who and who is struggling for which interests. Despite the fact that we, the presidential team, have succeeded in doing far from everything, the majority of people prefer the president and his strategy of reforms. They realize that presidential power is the linchpin that can maintain Russia's integrity. They realize that it is not Yeltsin's fault that we are meandering along the path to reforms, and it is his misfortune that he has been forced not to take wide steps but to hop, having been hobbled by the corps of deputies.

Fedotov, Ametistov, Kovalev View Court's Actions

LD2403221693

[Editorial Report] Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian at 1845 GMT on 24 March carries a 15-minute recording of a 23 March news conference given by Press and Information Minister Mikhail Fedotov, Constitutional Court member Ernest Ametistov, and Sergey Kovalev, chairman of the Supreme Soviet Human Rights Commission.

Kovalev begins by saying that President Yeltsin's decree had not been published and no copies were available to the Constitutional Court: They only had a photocopy of one of the versions of the draft decree obtained informally from persons unknown.

Fedotov comments on the legal basis for impeachment of the president, saying that it could only take place following a decision reached by the Constitutional Court in accordance with the law. Nonetheless, in the course of the Constitutional Court's reaching its conclusions, numerous articles of the law regarding its activities had been breached, he says.

Fedotov continues: "Of course, a decision of this kind cannot be any kind of basis for anything except solely for the suspension of the powers of the members of the Constitutional Court. But this decision is made by the Constitutional Court itself." He enumerates the articles of the law on the Constitutional Court that have been breached, giving as an example Zorkin expressing his opinion of the matters under discussion before the court had reached its decision. Fedotov continues: "Part 3 of Article 27 of the law on the Constitutional Court has been breached, under which the judge is obliged to withdraw if any doubt can be cast on his objectivity. What doubt can there be over his objectivity, if the judge says the president's decision, his actions and appeals are unconstitutional? What sort of objectivity is that? He has made up his mind beforehand.

"Part 1 of Article 32 of the law on the Constitutional Court has been breached, under which the Constitutional Court decides only issues of law and not issues of politics." He says that those whose anticonstitutional activity is under discussion were not informed of the sitting and not called to the court.

Fedotov continues: "Part 3 of Article 36 has been breached because each side has the right to set out its position and ask questions at the sitting of the Constitutional Court. But nobody invited them. They were not given the chance to set out their positions and ask questions of those who are making claims against them." Fedotov goes on to list procedural mistakes on the part of the Constitutional Court, specifically not giving proper notice of the issues and documents to be discussed. Only the Constitutional Court can repeal its own decision, Fedotov says. He points out that it has the right to do this if it is recognized that the decision was reached as a result of incorrect procedure. Fedotov concludes by saying that it is poor practice for lawyers to pass judgment on the basis of hearsay, even presidential hearsay, and not on facts supported by genuine documents. "Passing judgment on the basis of hearsay, I'm sorry, is not jurisprudence but something completely different which bears absolutely no relation to it," Fedotov states.

Ernst Mikhaylovich Ametistov, a member of the Constitutional Court, begins by saying that the hurried decision of the Constitutional Court was entirely due to political considerations. He said that like many other members of the court, he had firmly believed in it and had been happy to work there. He adds: "But what has started happening in the court over the last few months grieves me." He goes on to talk about the court's role at the Seventh Congress of People's Deputies and since. He says that he felt very heavy hearted about the way events were developing. "When we approached the Eighth Congress and when we prepared a resolution I insisted in every possible way that the Constitutional Court should continue to follow this line—this line of being a mediator and go-between, the guarantor of civil peace in our country—in its message and at the Congress. Unfortunately these efforts yielded no results," he says.

Amestitov then asks journalists to imagine what would have happened if the court had acted in the way that it did at the Seventh Congress. He says: "It would have come out and said that the Seventh Congress resolution—and I am completely convinced that this was a special type of resolution—was only adopted by the Congress, but it was adopted to implement a trilateral agreement. It cannot be unilaterally revoked as that violates the very agreement which our chairman signed. We should have stated categorically that the judicial

basis of the conflict between the powers is a very serious contradiction in the Constitution itself, primarily between the first and third articles on the one hand, where the division of powers is laid down, and then Article 104, which permits the Congress to assume the right to resolve all questions, which to all intents and purposes means there is a legal lack of any demarcation of authority for the Congress. None of this was done. I firmly believe that the Constitutional Court is to a large extent responsible for what has now taken place, for the actions of the president and the president's decree, which should be published, were undertaken as a direct and logical result of the resolution of the Eighth Congress."

He goes on to say that unlike Fedotov he did not want to examine the decree in detail. He says: "We were obliged to adopt measures to help resolve this issue, but we did not do this. However, it is still not too late." Ametistov says that during the all-night sitting of the Constitutional Court he urged his colleagues to wait until the decree was published and to examine petitions from the deputies regarding the constitutionality of the resolution of the Eighth Congress along with the presidential decree. "And then we would once more be acting in the same role and would once more boost our authority. Unfortunately, no one listened to me," he states.

Sergey Kovalev, chairman of the Supreme Soviet Human Rights Commission, asks what events "these men" [as heard] were counting on. He states: "I think that their calculation is very simple. If the impeachment takes place, then Aleksandr Vladimirovich Rutskoy, the vice president, will by law assume the duties of the president. Then he will become the commander in chief. The structure of the power ministries will be subordinate to him, and this he can do, in a quasi-legal way, as none of these resolutions are based on even the sense and spirit of even our scrappy and contradictory Constitution. Then he can give an order to the structures of the power ministries to throw out the president, for example."

A journalist expressed his doubts that Rutskoy would act in such a way. Kovalev says he hopes that this would not happen and that the only hope is society's common sense. He says that unlike Ametistov he could not pin any hopes on the commonsense and moral qualities of the Constitutional Court, but still has hopes for the electorate. "I am counting upon the people expressing their will by the legal and peaceful means of a referendum," he states.

Shumeyko, Filatov on Possible Referendum Scenarios

MK2403114493 Moscow MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI in Russian No. 13, 28 Mar 93 (Signed to Press 23 Mar 93) p A8

[Text] MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI has asked all of today's key players one question: "What are the best, worst, and most likely scenarios as events develop?"

Only three answered.

First Deputy Prime Minister Vladimir Shumeyko: "This would be the best way out: When the president's edict announcing a vote of confidence in himself appears, the Supreme Soviet consents to it and charges the Central Electoral Commission with carrying it out. Then a polished system comes into operation, and it will be simpler to organize everything, even if the Supreme Soviet does not consent to a vote on the constitution and the law on elections. It will be possible to separate these questions.

"The worst of the realistic ways out will be if the Supreme Soviet totally rejects the president's proposal and starts erecting obstacles through local organs of power. Impeachment of the president is unrealistic. There are no reasons for it. The edict contains no hint that the president will use his powers to overthrow the constitutional organs of power. It is hardly possible to speak seriously of street clashes. I believe that public order will be fully ensured. All power remains in the provinces."

Sergey Filatov, leader of the president's administration: "In my view, Boris Nikolayevich has found the best course of action. The worst will be realized if the president's opponents are able to block his actions."

Ramazan Abdulatipov, Russian Supreme Soviet Soviet of Nationalities chairman: "It is difficult for Russia to find a favorable way out. The breakup of the Russian Federation is a most terrible thing. Unfortunately, the president does not give due consideration to his steps. His edict on the Cossacks is one example. He virtually sanctions the creation of parallel power structures at all levels. If this happens today in Rostov Oblast and in Krasnodar and Stavropol Krays, tomorrow the national movements in the North Caucasus will do the same.

"The resignation of any statesman in this situation is of no significance. Let us assume that the Congress impeaches the president. What then? Neither the president, nor the government, nor the Supreme Soviet can govern Russia independently today. Boris Yeltsin's appeal has destroyed the fragile balance between the power structures which had only just taken shape. It has destroyed it not in the president's favor. Yeltsin just cannot understand that under our very difficult conditions the Supreme Soviet and the Congress, apart from anything else, are also the last barrier between him and dissatisfied society. Take away these institutions of power, and tomorrow you will have to look for a different 'enemy.'

"Early elections of parliament and the president represent the only possibility of surmounting the crisis. Although this too is an extremely dangerous operation today: It is almost impossible to create a strong federation in the absence of a federal center. But I can see no other way out."

The session scheduled for Tuesday lasted just 20 minutes: The deputies deemed it "unethical" to discuss the

Constitutional Court's ruling on the president's appeal to the people as he grieves over his mother's death. The speaker himself, who two hours earlier had not been so scrupulous, proposed postponing the debate until the morning. After telling journalists at a news conference that the Constitutional Court had deemed certain points in Boris Yeltsin's appeal not in line with the constitution, Ruslan Khasbulatov remarked: "It is clear that there is every reason to institute impeachment proceedings—this is unequivocal. The Congress must be convened for just this purpose...."

Maybe the Congress will consume the president, but, as far as is known, the Constitutional Court's ruling in this regard contained no conclusions: It was assumed that they would be reported at the session. The speaker's attempts to forestall events could have been regarded as direct pressure on deputies if the deputies had not yielded so readily to this pressure. In addition, Ruslan Khasbulatov once again assessed the president's actions as "a fact of a direct coup d'etat," although there are no such assessments in the Constitutional Court's ruling—it speaks of "destruction of the principle of the separation of powers" and of "interference in the competence of subjects of the federation."

While admitting that, given any decision of the Supreme Soviet and the Congress, early elections of all power structures become inevitable, Ruslan Khasbulatov rated the president's proposal to hold the vote of confidence as "simply a trick." On the same day, according to an ITAR-TASS report, First Deputy Prime Minister Vladimir Shumeyko declared that, even if parliament cancels the president's edict, "we will, all the same, conduct the vote, using the executive's resources, and will endeavor to ensure that there are no disturbances."

Poll Shows Muscovites Support Yeltsin

PM2503095593 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 25 Mar 93 First Edition p 1

[Unattributed report: "President's Actions Receive Public Support"]

[Text] The events of recent days have significantly exacerbated the political situation in Russia and polarized public opinion still further. In this situation, opposing political forces are seeking to interpret citizens' opinion in their own favor, by no means always correctly, distorting the real disposition of public sympathies.

Here are the results of a poll carried out by the All-Russian Center for the Study of Public Opinion 22 March. The poll was carried out by the center's Moscow department in conjunction with KOMKON-2 in Moscow; a total of 1,100 people were polled. The sample represented all the main social and demographic groups of the city's adult population.

How do you assess Boris Yeltsin's latest actions?

just what is needed in the present circumstances—47 percent
insufficiently tough—12 percent
too tough—4 percent
I am against Yeltsin's position in principle—18 percent
not interested—5 percent
know little about it—11 percent
hard to say—3 percent

Do you think that these actions are necessary to stabilize the situation, or will they just make the situation worse?

necessary—49 percent
make the situation worse—27 percent
know little about it—17 percent
hard to say—7 percent

Do you or do you not approve of Yeltsin's introduction of a special rule procedure, under which the Congress and the Supreme Soviet continue to operate, but cannot repeal the president's edicts?

approve—56 percent
disapprove—23 percent
hard to say—21 percent

If a vote is held on the question of confidence in the president, will you vote for or against the president, or will you not take part in the vote?

in support of Yeltsin—59 percent
against Yeltsin—16 percent
will not participate—20 percent
hard to say—5 percent

Are you for or against nationwide elections for the Russian parliament being held right now?

for elections—63 percent
against elections—18 percent
hard to say—19 percent

Are you for fresh parliamentary elections, the resignation of the president, or the achievement of compromise between them?

new parliamentary elections—46 percent
resignation of the president—11 percent
a compromise—33 percent
hard to say—15 percent

Would you or would you not support a decision right now on the president's resignation and the transfer of his powers to Vice President Aleksandr Rutskoy?

would support this—20 percent
would not support this—65 percent
hard to say—15 percent

If clashes break out between supporters of the Supreme Soviet and the president with the aim of gaining supreme power [verkhovenstvo vlasti], will you take part on one side or the other, or will you try to remain on the sidelines of this conflict?

I will take part on the president's side—40 percent
I will take part on parliament's side—6 percent
I will remain on the sidelines—49 percent
hard to say—5 percent

Which politician do you trust most?

Yeltsin—50 percent
Zorkin—3 percent
Rutskoy—9 percent
Khasbulatov—2 percent
Chernomyrdin—5 percent
none of them—29 percent
hard to say—2 percent

Constitutional Democrats Say Most Deputies Oppose Yeltsin

OW2403133693 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1320 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Political Committee of the Party of Constitutional Democrats believes that the majority of deputies want to remove Boris Yeltsin from his post and pass power in all its entirety to the "soviets" (regional councils - IF [INTERFAX]). Their work at all levels during the transition period over the past three years showed that this form of government has no future, while the results of the 8th Congress of People's Deputies excluded the possibility of attaining a reasonable compromise between the executive and legislative branches of power, the statement reads. The congress openly neglected the principle of the division of powers which is mandatory for a democratic society and which figures in the current constitution. The conduct of the deputies and of the chairman of the Constitutional Court, who tried to evaluate the legitimacy of a yet unpublished presidential decree, might cause surprise if it had not pointed with all clarity to the desire to seize power at any cost, this document goes on to say. If implemented, the president's plans, set forth in his March 20 appeal, might be more useful for the development of a law-based state and civil society than the "constitutional" anarchy characteristic of the country over the past few months, says the statement of the political committee.

Official Suggests 'Simple Majority' Can Impeach Yeltsin

OW2403133993 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1321 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The coordinator of the Smena-New Policy parliamentary group, Oleg Plotnikov, told INTERFAX a simply majority rather than two-thirds of the votes might be enough to impeach President Boris Yeltsin at the forthcoming Congress of People's Deputies. Plotnikov is the author of an amendment to the constitution under which the president may be impeached if he makes an attempt to change the territorial division or political system of the Russian Federation, or disband or suspend the operation of any legally elected body of power. The mechanism to enforce the amendment had not yet been worked out, Plotnikov said. However, in his opinion, the congress is in a position to decide that a simple majority of votes will be enough, although, in that case, Plotnikov said, the president could only be impeached if the Constitutional Court decided that he had made an attempt to change the Russian Federation's territorial division or political system.

Democratic Groups To Rally in Defense of Yeltsin

LD2403145193 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1300 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Text] The public committee of Russia's democratic organizations will hold a rally in defense of the president on the day the congress opens. In an appeal distributed today, it is stressed that all Russians must decide who to follow: the nationally elected president, who is appealing directly to the people, or the congress, which is denying the people the right to a referendum.

Left Democrats on Causes of Political Crisis

MK2403120693 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 24 Mar 93 p 2

[Report by Indira Dunayeva under the "Opposition" rubric: "Entrepreneurs and Trade Unions Appear To Be United. They Rely on the Wisdom of the People]

[Text] Leaders of the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia, the Civic Union, and the Congress of Left-Wing Democratic Forces stated at a press conference yesterday their organizations' positions in connection with President Yeltsin's appeal. According to those gathered, the president already had additional powers, but he used them to pursue an "antipopular" policy of "shock therapy," and in response to the "mild attempts by the Congress to oppose his destructive policy" he made an unconstitutional decision on special rule. Andrey Golovin, Russian Federation people's deputy, revealed that after the Constitutional Court ruled on the legality of the president's actions, the Congress will convene with only one question on its agenda: the suspension of President Yeltsin from office.

The Congress of Left-Wing Forces Consultative Council stated that early elections of both parliament and the president can more fully and objectively reflect the opinion of the people of Russia than the contemplated poll. According to the Consultative Council, the crux of the present political crisis is not a conflict between the executive and legislative powers, but the economic breakdown. Which is precisely why representatives of trade unions and entrepreneurs came to share the same view, united as they are by the idea of preserving the framework of the economy and preventing total impoverishment and the antipopular redistribution of property. Asked about their actions, should the president

ignore the Congress rulings, participants in the press conference replied they rely on the wisdom of our society which would prevent it from going as far as civil war. They think that Yeltsin's team issues provocative calls, and the task of sensible citizens is to prevent bloodshed and work interruptions at plants that can be brought about by large and frequent rallies.

Cossacks Declare Readiness To Defend Nation

OW2403205493 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2019 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Russian Cossacks welcome the President's decree providing for government support to their movement and are ready to protect Russia's frontiers and its economic interests as well as public order and peace, Chiefs of the Russian Cossack Union said in a statement on Wednesday.

The Council of Senior Cossak Chiefs ended a two day meeting in Moscow on Wednesday by discussing Yeltsin's decree on reforming military structures, borderguard and Interior Ministry troops in the North Caucasian region of Russia and on government support to the Cossack Movement.

Their statement says that "at this time of political instability, the Cossacks are ready to stand up against any destructive forces or politicians seeking to drag Russia into civil war or the break up of its territory and will support any move aimed at internal stabilization. [no closing quote as received]

The Chiefs said the Cossacks had been and would remain the pillar of the Russian state. "They will never go against the will of the nation and will in every way defend its interests," says the statement.

The Cossacks' Union says it will never allow its members to be dragged into "political intrigues" or to split them into "whites" and "reds." The statement says the Cossacks' strength lies in unity, and that anyone seeking to split it for achieving his selfish gains or political aims is either an enemy to Cossack rennaisance or an instigator.

Moscow Pro-, Anti-Yeltsin Rallies Authorized for 28 Mar

OW2403205593 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2020 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Moscow city government has authorized marches and rallies to be held by supporters and opponents of President Yeltsin on March 28. Members of pro-democracy groups are scheduled to gather in Triumph Square (formerly Mayakovskiy Square) at 11 a.m. on Sunday before marching along Tverskaya Street and Lubyanka Square to hold a rally outside Red Square. Up to 100,000 people are expected to attend the rally starting at 12.30 p.m. and ending at 2 p.m.

The oppositional National Salvation Front, the Moscow Workers' Movement and the Officers' Union will concurrently hold a march and rally in "defence of the Constitution". Their members are expected to gather in Arbatskiy Square outside the Khudozhestvenny Cinema at 11 a.m. before starting their own rally outside the building of the Russian Parliament at noon. The rally is to culminate not later than 2.30 p.m. The organisers are planning to gather up to 10,000 people.

The Mayor of Moscow also permitted two other movements, Russian Workers and Moscow Workers to hold a rally outside the main entrance to Gorkiy Park from 11 a.m. till 1 p.m. Up to 7,000 people are expected to attend the rally.

At the same time, members of the Moscow Workers' Movement have failed to secure permission to put up a picket outside the building of Ostankino television and radio broadcasting company.

All the organizers of Sunday events were given a warning about personal responsibility for the maintenance of law and order.

Foreign Ministry Official Criticizes Parliament

MK2403123893 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 24 Mar 93 p 10

[Report by Viktor Zamyatin and Georgiy Bovt: "Ministry Criticizes Parliament"]

[Text] Amid broad international reaction to the latest developments in Russia, the Russian foreign policy agency could not possibly stand aloof from the crisis in power. A briefing organized Monday evening by the Foreign Ministry's department for liaison with the Supreme Soviet and political parties was devoted to the relationships between the Foreign Ministry and parliament.

Foreign Ministry's View of Events of Recent Days

Department Chief Vladimir Savelyev assessed the events of the extraordinary parliamentary session as the "theater of the absurd" and noted that the way the drama has been unfolding gives reason to say that the deputies' "Bolshevik" traditions are growing into "neo- Bolshevik" ones. He viewed the crisis as a conflict between the "old Soviet system" as represented by parliament and the new one that will "enable Russia to build a worthy future," represented by the president of Russia. According to Savelyev, the texts of the presidential edicts (by the time of the press conference they were not as yet available) could clarify something in the existing situation. He expressed the supposition that one of the aims of the presidential TV address has been a kind of "reconnaissance by combat"—it has forced the Supreme Soviet to "reveal itself." Impeachment of a president

"with whom one disagrees," according to Savelyev, an expert on the U.S. political system, should be an attribute of a rule-of-law state, but in this event there should also be the option of early elections. Thus far in Russia, according to Savelyev, legislative power "has the weight advantage."

Foreign Ministry Spokesman on Possible Fate of His Agency

Savelyev considered the most pessimistic scenario—the coming to power of "the intransigent opposition," which is fraught with the Foreign Ministry's being turned into "a kind of Defense Ministry." In the event of Kozyrev's resignation, which is very likely, Foreign Ministry personnel would like to see a career diplomat at the head of their agency. The often-cited list of candidacies for this post is invariable: Vladimir Lukin, Russian ambassador to the United States; Yuliy Vorontsov, Russian ambassador to the UN Security Council; and Kozyrev's first deputy Anatoliy Adamishin, although Mikhail Astafyev, who is not a career diplomat, has also been actively seeking of late to be included in that list.

Savelyev on Parliament's Foreign Political Activity

The Supreme Soviet's growing ambition to formulate Russia's foreign policy has manifested itself, according to the Foreign Ministry official, in an intensified critique of the Foreign Ministry's concept of foreign policy and the toughening of the international relations committee's position on various questions, in particular, the difficulties that have arisen over the ratification of the START II Treaty, the Treaty on Collective Security Within the CIS, the Treaty on Friendship and Cooperation with Hungary, and the CIS Charter. In addition, the ministry spokesman said, mindful of the slogan "the cadres decide everything," the deputies are also increasingly trying to influence the Foreign Ministry's cadre policy.

Division Bound for Vladikavkaz To Remain in Moscow

OW2403173593 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1708 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Units of the Dzerzhinsky Division of domestic troops will stay at their permanent positions in Moscow and in the Moscow District, confirmed the chief command of the Interior Ministry's domestic troops to INTERFAX on Wednesday. It was earlier planned that they would be transferred to Vladikavkaz. The chief command clearly stressed that this is in no way connected to the recent events in domestic political life. Instead of units from the Dzerzhinsky Division, divisions of the Northern Caucasus district of domestic troops will be sent to North Ossetia for the planned replacement of troops in the state of emergency zone.

More Regional Comment on Yeltsin Move

MK2403111093 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 24 Mar 93 pp 1, 3

[NEGA report under "Summary" rubric: "Critical Mass Builds Up in Regions. Russian Federation and CIS Capitals Continue To Comment on Events in Moscow's Corridors of Power"]

[Text] Vladikavkaz—At a news conference devoted, as it was put, "to the constitutional crisis in Moscow," Akhsarbek Galazov, chairman of the North Ossetian Supreme Soviet, Sergey Khetagurov, chairman of the republic Council of Ministers, and their deputies expressed regret over the latest twist of tension between the president and the Supreme Soviet. As the Council of Ministers chairman put it, such a development of events would have been impossible had those who are now "conducting an open power struggle" immersed themselves in the people's vital problems or "witnessed the bloodshed" in relation to "regional peculiarities"... Without false modesty Khetagurov called his republic an example of fruitful cooperation between the two branches of power, a republic where—despite the difficulties associated with overcoming the effects of the armed conflict in Prigorodnyy Rayon—it is proving possible to preserve political and economic stability. The top people in North Ossetia remarked that the "fluids of confrontation" emanating from Moscow are being perceived as an indisputable inconvenience in the everyday life of the republic as "an integral part of Russia." In Khetagurov's opinion, the opportunity to exploit the instability of the situation in the country will not be missed by "third forces," whose inclusion in political life will hardly simplify the situation. "It makes me shudder to think that, unless ambitious politicians find a common language, it will lead us all to catastrophe," he said.

Akhsarbek Galazov, a participant in the Eighth Congress of Russian Federation People's Deputies and chairman of the North Ossetian Supreme Soviet, complained of what he views as the inconsistent position of the Russian Federation president, who has radically changed his viewpoint at a time when a definite understanding had been reached at his meeting with republic heads on the eve of the Congress.

Irkutsk—Oblast Soviet Chairman Viktor Ignatenko gave NEGA a telephone interview.

[NEGA] What is your attitude toward the president's appeal?

[Ignatenko] In my view a number of the intentions he expressed in his television appeal are contrary to the Russian Federation Constitution. They are the vote-poll [golosovaniye-opros] on the draft constitution and on the election law. But the president has the right to raise the question of confidence. An oblast soviet session adopted an appeal to the federal organs of power and all the Federation's subjects. We are appealing to everyone

who signed the Federation Treaty to get together and determine a coordinated policy to solve this crisis. There are a few options here: to set up a bicameral parliament by means of early elections, a Constitutional Assembly—maybe it should be an assembly of the Federation's subjects—or something else. But this must be ascertained not only by federal organs, which cannot look at each other calmly, but also by the Federation's subjects. The regions will thereby assume part of the responsibility for pursuing a coordinated line.

[NEGA] That is, it is a question of uniting the heads of the representative and executive branches of all the Federation's subjects in a kind of consultative organ?

[Ignatenko] Yes, for the time being the conference should take place on a consultative level. But we all signed the Federation Treaty together. A year has passed. The fate of the Russian Federation Constitution is the fate of the entire federative state. It is now not even a question of who among the federal leaders has violated the constitution but of who has done this more—the president or parliament. So, representatives of the federal authorities must not themselves determine how to get out of the crisis, but together with the Russian Federation's subjects. If there is a referendum, what questions should it ask and when should it be held? If there are early elections, for whom should the elections be and within what time scale? If there is a new constitution, when and by whom should it be adopted? I am afraid that both the president's and parliament's reformist potential has already been exhausted. Therefore all these questions should be answered by the Federation's subjects. Right now they are observing and expressing positions of one sort or another, but while they are doing so the critical mass in the regions is building up.

[NEGA] Are you sure that all the Federation's subjects will support you? After all, there is the Council of Heads of Republics, the Union of Governors...

[Ignatenko] Everyone is lining up in separate ranks—the ranks of the executive branch, the republics, and the oblasts. The classic principle of "divide and rule" is operating. I therefore repeat that the federal organs of power and everyone who signed the Federation Treaty must get together. The regions must not be detached observers or detached opponents. The Federation's subjects have the right to and must take part in the resolution of this crisis. Maybe it is worth postponing the constitution's adoption, no matter how annoying that would be for Yeltsin and Khasbulatov, who are assuming the mantle of fathers of the new constitution? And setting about forming a new federal power structure. [Ignatenko ends]

Krasnodar—The Inner Soviet of Krasnodar Kray Soviet of People's Deputies has adopted an appeal to the Russian president, Supreme Soviet, and Constitutional Court chairman.

"The situation that has developed," in the deputies' opinion, "was caused by violations of the currently existing constitution and the lack of a new Russian Constitution that meets the needs of the actual socioeconomic and political situation in the country."

Proceeding from this premise, the Inner Soviet of the Krasnodar Kray Soviet has demanded that the authorities submit a draft of the basic provisions of a new Russian Constitution to the Federation's subjects within three months.

The Kuban deputies consider it premature to submit the draft of the new Russian Constitution to nationwide discussion on 25 April 1993. "Until such time as a new constitution has been adopted we consider it essential that the provisions of the currently existing constitution and laws of Russia be implemented."

Nalchik—An appeal to citizens by the president, Supreme Soviet Presidium, and Cabinet of Ministers of Kabardino-Balkaria was read out on the republic's television. It states, in particular, that the confrontation in the top organs of power in the Russian Federation has assumed an irreconcilable nature, which could have unpredictable consequences for the state's integrity and for the future of its peoples. The leaders of Kabardino-Balkaria declared that they had repeatedly appealed to the Russian Federation president and Supreme Soviet to end the confrontation and combine efforts to normalize the economy and improve the people's well- being. Unfortunately, however, those appeals were not heeded and did not exert due influence.

The republic's president, Supreme Soviet Presidium, and Cabinet of Ministers stated their allegiance to the Constitution of the Kabardino-Balkar Republic, the Constitution of the Russian Federation, and the Federation Treaty. They asked the republic's citizens to keep calm.

Life in the republic is maintaining its normal rhythm. There have been no demonstrations or statements in defense of a particular branch of Russian power.

Ulan-Ude—A session of the Buryat Supreme Soviet has opened.

The first day passed in discussing the situation that has taken shape around President Boris Yeltsin's appeal to the citizens of Russia, as well as the subsequent statements by Russia's top officials.

A majority of deputies advocated that all representatives of state power in Russia comply with the constitution and also find a compromise solution to the problem. In addition, the parliamentarians want a more clear-cut status for the Federation Treaty to be defined.

The Supreme Soviet members proposed putting an appeal to the Russian president and Supreme Soviet. Some of them advocated holding the referendum on confidence in the Russian president on 25 April.

Cheboksary—Eduard Kubarev, chairman of the Chuvash Supreme Soviet Presidium, believes that President Boris Yeltsin has taken a courageous step. Kubarev said in an interview with a NEGA correspondent: "The president has shown courage by deciding to hold a referendum which will determine confidence in him personally." In the Chuvash leader's opinion, this shows Yeltsin "as a president who wants to rely on the people's opinion." According to him, it is premature for the Supreme Soviet to react to the president's appeal before the edicts have been published.

Eduard Kubarev emphasized that the Chuvash organs of state power will operate on the basis of the Russian Federation Constitution, the republic constitution, and the Federation Treaty.

The Baltic—A joint statement by the heads of state of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania reads, in particular: "The Russian Federation is dealing with a serious political crisis which could have an impact on the future of reforms in Russia, as well as on stability and security in both Europe and Asia.

"The Baltic states express the hope and conviction that the present crisis in Russia will be resolved peacefully by the Russian Government and people—which must meet the interests of the Federation's peoples, as well as those of Russia's partners, and will strengthen stability and security throughout the world."

Bishkek—President Askar Akayev of Kyrgyzstan declared in connection with Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin's appeal to the citizens of Russia: "Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin's appeal to the citizens of Russia attests to a growing political crisis in the top echelons of power in this country—a crisis which could lead to extremely serious destabilization of the situation not only in Russia but also in other CIS states (...).

"Kyrgyzstan is vitally interested in ensuring that Russia does not abandon progress toward democracy and a market economy. I believed and believe now that President Yeltsin is one of the guarantors of this progress. To a considerable degree he embodies my hopes for the success of democratic reforms in Russia, since he plays the key role in the process of these reforms.

"In my opinion, the desire of the nationally elected president of Russia to give the people the opportunity to make their own choice of the political system and to decide on the modes and forms of democratic development is perfectly legitimate (...).

"I consider it my human duty in the present situation to express support for his courageous and noble efforts in the struggle for Russia's bright future."

Chisinau—The first reaction in Moldovan political circles to events in the Russian Federation following President Boris Yeltsin's television address was very restrained. At a news conference devoted to the results of a Moldovan parliament session, Speaker Petr Luchinskiy said that the political crisis in Russia could have a negative effect on bilateral relations between Moldova and Russia. Responding to journalists' attempts to elicit from the speaker a specific assessment of Boris Yeltsin's address, Petr Luchinskiy declared that clear information, above all, is needed for a clear position. According to the chairman of the Moldovan parliament, such information has not yet arrived from the republic's embassy in Moscow.

That same evening, national radio and television disseminated an official statement by Moldovan President Mircea Snegur concerning the events taking place in Russia. It states that "Moldova has an interest in seeing Russia become a really democratic country." According to the president, the fall of democracy in Russia would spell for Moldova the accession to power of "architects of the dismemberment of the Republic of Moldova and apologists for an imperial ideology, who are now, following the loss of so many human lives, continuing with the help of official and unofficial emissaries to restrain the process of a return to normal life in the Dniester region."

The Gagauz and Dniester Republics are showing no less interest in the outcome of the political crisis in Moscow. Their leadership realizes that the future of the self-proclaimed republics depends on who gains the upper hand in the political confrontation between the executive and legislative branches of power in Russia. It is an open secret today that those Russian parliamentarians who campaign for the restoration of the former USSR are doing all they can verbally to support Komrat and Tiraspol. As for the economy, the majority of enterprises in the Dniester region are geared to the east. The entire base of raw materials and semimanufactured goods lies in the industrial regions of the Russian Federation, and the sales market is also in Russia. Aleksandr Karaman, vice president of the Dniester Republic, expressed regret that the leadership of such a large state as the Russian Federation is wasting effort on infighting. In the opinion of the vice president of the Dniester region, whatever the outcome of the confrontation, no one will derive any benefit from it.

Riga—A statement by Anatolij Gorbunovs, chairman of the Latvian Supreme Council, in connection with the conflict of powers in Russia has been published.

It states, in particular: "Russia, our neighboring state, is at present in a very crucial and complex situation.... Latvia has an interest in a stable and democratic Russia and will always strive for democratic relations with it. But it is the uncertainty and the conflict in the Russian power structures themselves that are an obstacle to Latvia's desire to find in Russia's political leadership true and reliable partners in talks."

Tbilisi—According to Eduard Shevardnadze, the decision to support President Yeltsin was made by him at once, albeit after consultation with experts. "The path chosen by Yeltsin is the most optimum one, and it is no

coincidence that it has been supported abroad," the chairman of the Georgian parliament believes. There is a very real danger that the blackest, most dangerous forces—national patriots and reactionaries—will emerge onto the political arena. It was no coincidence that Anatoliy Lukyanov, and not only he, turned up at the rally.... This requires serious thought." Shevardnadze expressed the hope that, if Yeltsin acts the way he stated in his television address to the people, then he has a good chance of victory. Eduard Shevardnadze emphasized that Georgia is with those countries that have clearly and unequivocally come out in support of Yeltsin and Russian democracy.

Regions' Response to Crisis Viewed

PM2403173193 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 25 Mar 93 p 1

[Unattributed report under general heading: "In the Fiercest Dispute There Is a Boundary Which Must Not Be Crossed"]

[Text] These days the editorial office is receiving so many documents, statements, and reports of various kinds in connection with the keen political antagonism which has developed in the top echelons of power that the newspaper is simply physically unable to digest them all. That is why we have been obliged to describe what is happening largely as a chronicle. The actual position of KRASNAYA ZVEZDA also compels us to restraint. Our newspaper is a military newspaper representing the Defense Ministry and the Armed Forces. And as we know (the president and the legislators have both said this clearly) the armed forces are told not to interfere in political conflicts and not to allow military force to be used for political aims.

Nonetheless, the military, including KRASNAYA ZVEZDA journalists, are naturally attentively following the development of events in the country. Attentively and with great concern.

The focus of attention undoubtedly consists of the actions of the main protagonists—the Russian president, the vice president, the Supreme Soviet chairman, the Constitutional Court chairmen, members of the president's team and the government, and the deputies... The influx of reports from various regions of Russia is as it were receding to the background. But it is this influx which, when we familiarize ourselves with it closely, makes us more alarmed than even the most drastic maneuvers by politicians in the center.

The reaction from the regions to what is happening is not homogenous, as they say. There are responses from those who have sided unconditionally with the president, there are responses from those who fiercely oppose him. There are more of the former (at any rate among the reports coming in through ITAR-TASS and RIA channels). But there is even more information behind the outward clarity and seemingly painstaking precision of the formulations there lies something encoded or unsaid. From a whole series of places reports have come in about the local authorities' support for "B.N. Yeltsin's proposal for a vote of confidence in him from the people." But does it follow from that that given the possible further aggravation of the situation the executive power will receive support with regard to the rest? Or on the contrary from a number of regions statements are coming in denouncing "violations of the Constitution from wherever they may come." But does that mean that people here will support the Congress and parliament if they undertake extreme actions with regard to the president, for instance actual impeachment?

Some political scientists say that Russia's fate and the choice of the path along which it will travel are being decided today not so much in the capital as locally—in the republics, krays, and oblasts... That looks increasingly the case. At any rate, it is perfectly clear that now, whether or not the politicians in the center want it, in conducting a fierce dispute they must constantly keep in mind that factor—the factor of the regions, the factor of the subjects of the federation.

While the struggle is at the level of admittedly sharp and very risky political steps which are nonetheless by no means the most extreme, the subjects of the federation are responding in a perturbed, tense, and nervous way but not rashly and not destructively. But if the last "either-or" should come from one side or other will there not then be a chain reaction of collapse? Will the so far restrained, diplomatically precise statements not turn into a tidal wave of desperate protests, into statements of a completely different kind—about the refusal to obey particular decisions from the center?

One thing is perfectly clear: However acute the political dispute in the center, in that dispute, as in any other, there is a boundary which simply must not be crossed, which it is not permitted to cross. It is the boundary beyond which there lies the collapse of Russia's statehood and territorial integrity. It is the boundary beyond which lie chaos and bloodshed. It is the boundary beyond which there can no longer be any victors. May that boundary not be overlooked in the heat of antagonism!

All participants in the present political battles—both the main protagonists and figures of a lesser scale—speak and continue to speak of the welfare of Russia and the welfare of its people. It is another matter that many politicians see in a very different and sometimes directly contradictory way where exactly Russia's welfare lies and what its future should be like. Well, that is a problem of convictions, a problem of conscience, positions, and ultimately of interests... But whatever one's convictions, positions, and interests, there is a truth which no one can deny at a sane level. In the dispute about what benefits Russia and what it should be like we must not sacrifice Russia itself. In the dispute about what the country's future should be like we must not gamble away its very existence. You must agree that is axiomatic.

Nizhniy Novgorod Officials Propose Council To End Crisis

LD2403184493 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1700 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Report by Nizhniy Novgorod correspondent N. Zvereva; from the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] Nizhniy Novgorod authorities waited in rare unanimity for three days to present a fundamentally new idea to deputies and journalists today. They have adopted an appeal to the Russian people containing the following points:

The federal authorities have completely exhausted themselves trying to resolve the constitutional crisis. The Russian Constitutional Court has, in fact, become a party—rather than an arbiter—in the argument of the powers. Further developments could take on an uncontrollable and tragic character for Russia. A third power is needed to end attempts by the conflicting sides to destroy each other. We, the Russian subjects who signed the Federation Treaty on 31 March 1992, are such a force. We must temporarily—until the constitutional crisis is overcome—confirm that we are responsible for Russia's fate and agree on joint action by setting up a federation council:

[Begin Ye. Krestyaninov, Nizhniy Novgorod Oblast soviet chairman, recording] We believe that this will prevent both the legislative and executive powers from taking abrupt and unreasonable steps. [end recording]

Kuzbass Miners Plan Strike, Rallies if Yeltsin Impeached

LD2503094593 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 0900 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Text] Kuzbass miners are on red alert and intend to begin a political strike if the Congress of People's Deputies announces the impeachment of the president of Russia. A RIA correspondent was told this in Kemerovo by Aleksandr Korotkikh, deputy chairman of the Council of Kuzbass Workers' Committees. He also said that rallies in support of the president and government of Russia are planned in many towns of Kemerovo oblast for 28 March.

St. Petersburg Mayor Interviewed on Yeltsin, Zorkin

LD2403232493

[Editorial Report] Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian at 2025 GMT on 24 March, in its "The Reform and Power" program, carries a 13-minute recorded interview with Anatoliy Sobchak, mayor of St. Petersburg. Sobchak is shown in his office. An unidentified journalist opens the interview by asking Sobchak about his views on the legality and basis of President Yeltsin's appeal and decrees.

Sobchak replies: "As a lawyer I believe that the Constitution is not a truncheon which one should use to beat one's political opponents about the head, and that the Constitution demands respect. And if I were to speak about those who are today accusing the president of unconstitutional actions—they have often spat upon this very Constitution themselves, if I can put it that way. They themselves treat this Constitution with disdain." He then cites two examples of the Supreme Soviet ignoring the Constitution—its refusal to allow a referendum on the land and private ownership last November, and the Eighth Congress throwing out the constitutional agreement reached at the Seventh Congress between the Congress and the president and then confirmed by the Constitutional Court.

He then points out that the system used by which any complaint is made to the Constitutional Court about a presidential decree means that the decree could not come into effect, and paralyzes the president, particularly as the court normally worked very slowly. Sobchak says: "Once more we end up in this vicious circle where the popularly elected president finds himself absolutely powerless, unable to adopt a single resolution. But all the sins of the country's administration and everything which happens in the country is laid at his door, therefore, I think that the president acted correctly in appealing to the people. I also think that he is correct in demanding that a referendum be held on 25 April. This is a referendum on confidence in the president himself. This referendum will confirm or not confirm the president's own mandate, therefore it is his right to appeal to the people and no one has the right to deprive the president of such a right to appeal to the people."

Sobchak says that the president had taken his action as he saw no other way out of the current situation, and he agrees with this assessment. He goes on to say that the people should decide. "Let the people themselves decide. No one should decide for them. Let the people decide for themselves whether they have confidence in the president or not, and if they do not have confidence in him, then Yeltsin will go. Who can say today that the president can guarantee 100 percent that the people will support him?" Sobchak says.

He then comments on the difficult situation in the country at the moment, with the reform process hitting people hard and the political deadlock leading to no improvement in the situation. He quotes the Constitution which states that "The people have the right to directly implement the sovereignty of the people." He says that they should be allowed to do this.

Sobchak states that the only contentious phrase in Yeltsin's appeal was the phrase "special rule." He says that he still has not seen this decree in print, so could not judge it.

The journalist then asks Sobchak what he thinks about the recent political actions of the chairman of the Constitutional Court, Valeriy Zorkin. Sobchak replies that

Zorkin's behavior amazed him as he had exceeded his remit by condemning Yeltsin's appeal before it was examined by the court. Sobchak states: "For some reason, on this problem, the chairman of the Constitutional Court hurled himself into the front line of the political furore and the political fray. You see, this is what is most astounding. I think that he really has lost the moral right to be a judge in this matter and in all likelihood, also to continue as chairman of the Constitutional Court. In his position today the proper thing to do after all that has happened would be to submit his resignation."

Sobchak says that he personally knew judges in the United States and France and knew how they acted when political battles were in progress, and that was how Zorkin should have acted.

Commenting on other statements made at the time, Sobchak says: "With the other statements, I could say different things. Someone has fallen asleep and can see himself occupying a new position, another is acting because of some other personal views, but I just find it difficult to explain from a purely professional or from a purely personal viewpoint why the chairman of the Constitutional Court adopted such a position, but the party membership card Comrade Zorkin kept in his pocket on 20 August is probably still being kept at home, as it is loyalty to this party and this ideology which is making him act in this way. In such a case this might justify what he has done to a certain extent, but then, if you are a devout communist and do not accept democracy and the existing regime, then you should say: I cannot remain impartial. As chairman of the Constitutional Court, I should be completely impartial, but I cannot remain impartial so I submit my resignation from this post and I will take part in political life as one of the political leaders and will attain my goals by normal political methods.

"That would be honorable, correct, and totally professional."

Sobchak concludes by saying that in a situation where the Constitution does not correspond to the needs of the people, then the Constitution needs to be changed, and this is what Yeltsin proposed.

Citizens Respond to Yeltsin's Address

LD2403203693 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 2010 GMT 24 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS]

[Text] Moscow March 24 TASS—ITAR-TASS correspondents continue to report on the response of Russia's residents to the address and decrees by Russian President Boris Yeltsin.

Participants in today's plenary session of the Union of Russian Cinematographers have declared their support of the president. They declared that Yeltsin's decree "on the activity of the executive bodies until the crisis of power is overcome" gives no ground for political hysteria.

Producer Sergey Solovyov, chairman of the Union of Cinematographers, told ITAR-TASS that some members of the union made a statement, saying that the referendum was the only way out in the existing situation. Over a hundred Muscovites—members of the union, have put their signatures under the statement by now. The statement was supported by cinematographers from St. Petersburg, Samara, Nizhnyy Novgorod, Rostov-on-Don and other cities who sent their telegrams to the union.

The movement for social accord in society, the continuation of economic reforms and the adoption of a new constitution—these are the tasks set forth by a committee in support of the Russian president which was set up in Bryansk. The committee consists of representatives of parties and movements of the democratic orientation.

A regional public committee for the defence of the constitution and the Soviet power was set up in Chelyabinsk in response to the president's address to the people. The committee comprises representatives of 13 parties and movements. At a news conference on Wednesday it was declared that people's deputies and the president are equally to blame for what h[illegible] happened in the country. Therefore, they should share the responsibility to the people. The regional committee has scheduled to hold meetings on March 28 and April 4. When asked by ITAR-TASS whether a meeting was necessary since both the executive and the legislative power have called to preserve calm and restraint, members of the committee declared that "there are means of settling the conflicts without holding meetings. However, democrats were the first to call a meeting on March 28. If they cancel the meeting, we shall follow suit."

A group of people's deputies from Chuvashia adopted a statement on Wednesday addressed to the Russian president, in which it expressed its support of the Russian president's address to the people. "In these difficult days both for you and our country we ask you to display constraint and firmness and be consistent in your intentions. We believe in you and pin our hopes on you," the statement said, signed, incidentally, by the city mayor Vitaliy Alekseyev.

Leaders of Tatarstan People's Front have supported the Russian president's address to the people and believe the declared measures were necessary for the defence of democratic reforms in the existing situation, says a statement made by this organisation. It is pointed out that the present composition of the Russian Parliament, elected long before radical changes in the economy began, under conditions of communist dictatorship, cannot fully reflect the interests of its electorate. Leaders

of the People's Front believe that the Russian Government and President Yeltsin should continue the reforms, since they are responsible to the Russian people for their implementation.

Fedotov Criticizes Court, Zorkin

MK2503110893 Moscow MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS in Russian 25 Mar 93 p 1

[Mikhail Gurevich report: "Zorkin Fought for Peace and Lost. Court Considered Its Own Television Set Unconstitutional"]

[Text] The Constitutional Court's nighttime decision was analyzed Tuesday evening at a news conference by Press Minister Mikhail Fedotov.

It was Mr. Zorkin who first trampled the law underfoot by expressing his categorical viewpoint at the Supreme Soviet session even before the matter had been examined in court. The Russian president's actions were assessed in the absence not only of the presidential edicts themselves but even of the text of Boris Yeltsin's statement—only on the basis of the television appeal.

Jurist Mikhail Fedotov counted more than 20 violations of the law by the Constitutional Court. The Constitutional Court does not examine political questions (Article 1). The Constitutional Court refuses to consider a request for a ruling in cases where the request concerns a political question (Article 77). A Constitutional Court judge cannot participate in political actions or carry out political propaganda and agitation (Article 14)—however, Zorkin's "peacemaking" and his participation in meetings of the president and the speaker prove strange. A Constitutional Court judge does not have the right to express his opinion in public anywhere but at a session of the court on a question adopted for examination by the court, until the decision on this question has been adopted (Article 20). Since Mr. Zorkin, a demagogue and a hypocrite, has repeatedly violated Article 20, his powers must be suspended in accordance with Article 18. True, this can only be done by decision of the court itself, which is still headed by the greatest peacemaker of our time and where only three judges did not sign that "shameful decision" (the words of one of them, Judge Ametistov).

The sides and their representatives who could have set forth their own position on the matter and put questions to opponents, witnesses, and experts (Article 36) were not invited to the nighttime gatherings in the Constitutional Court. Where were the witnesses and the experts who should have been sent notification of the Constitutional Court session and copies of the petitions at least 10 days before it started? Has anybody at all seen this petition? The court, however, adopted the matter for examination independently. Did they compress the timing? And yet, in accordance with the precise meaning of the constitution, Constitutional Court decisions must express the judges' legal position free from considerations of practical expediency and political partiality (Article 6). Articles 5, 10, 27, 28, 32, and 41 of the law and Articles 4 and 184 of the Russian Federation Constitution have also been violated.

"Following this flawed action by Zorkin and the court's decision, members of the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet Human Rights Committee issued a statement saying that those decisions of the Constitutional Court were unconstitutional," Committee Chairman Sergey Kovalev reported. "The Constitutional Court has committed a most flagrant violation of the law and, according to existing legal norms, should itself have announced the suspension of its activity and also its powers. But this is only possible on condition that the members of the Constitutional Court are highly moral people."

But what does Zorkin care about these arguments? Yesterday he again participated in a meeting of the president, the speaker, and the premier. He condescendingly gives Yeltsin an opportunity to become a "Russian De Gaulle," although it is known that De Gaulle held a referendum in his time, as a result of which France became a presidential republic with a strong parliament.

Chernomyrdin Apologizes to Irkutsk Leader Over Yeltsin Decree

LD2503111093 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1000 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Text] An RIA correspondent has learned from informed sources that the head of the Irkutsk Oblast administration has been received by Viktor Chernomyrdin, chairman of the Russian Government. He tendered his apologies to Nozhikov for the accusations made in the president's appeal to the citizens of Russia on 20 March, calling them unfounded and not serious.

The head of government also said that the people who prepared the document for the president's decree on sacking Nozhikov from his post will be punished.

Court Revokes 27 Parliament Directives 19 Mar

MK2403073093 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 20 Mar 93 p 3

[Aleksandr Balashov, Anton Antonov-Ovseyenko, Jr., report: "Constitutional Court Session. Court Revokes 27 of Speaker's Directives"]

[Text] The 19 March session of the Russian Constitutional Court for the first time ever unequivocally revoked directives issued by the Russian Supreme Soviet chairman and his deputies. Speaking at a briefing that followed, Constitutional Court Chairman Valeriy Zorkin drew journalists' attention to the results of his trip to the United States. However, he had to answer a whole series of purely political questions. In observers' view, the Constitutional Court chairman thus attempted to reestablish his reputation as political peacemaker which was tarnished during the Eighth Congress.

Yesterday's session of the Constitutional Court was devoted to the review of directives issued by the Supreme Soviet leadership. The hearings themselves began at a time when the Khasbulatov-Zorkin tandem that was formed at the Eighth Congress gave the public grounds to doubt the desire of Zorkin (as chief of the highest judicial body) for objectivity. Therefore, yesterday's session in fact amounted to an attempt by the Constitutional Court and its chairman to prove their independence from parliament. After brief deliberations the judges declared unconstitutional 27 directives by Ruslan Khasbulatov and his deputies regarding, among other things, the setting up of the Supreme Soviet security subunit and the introduction of parliamentary control over the activity of newspapers (the court made an official representation to the Supreme Soviet to that effect). In addition, the court revoked a joint decree by the Supreme Soviet Presidium and the government on the introduction of fixed prices of milk, bread, and other products: In the opinion of the court's members it amounted to an attempt by the state to intervene in market processes.

At the briefing that followed the session Valeriy Zorkin tried to focus journalists' attention on the results of his U.S. trip (it was reported by KOMMERSANT-DAILY on 19 March). The journalists, however, proved persistent and kept asking him about the political confrontation between the branches of power in Russia. Zorkin categorically dismissed a hint that he is sympathetic to the Supreme Soviet chairman, stating that the congress could well have done without adopting an amendment to the Constitution limiting the authority of the president, whom he (Zorkin) personally "supports." The court chairman, however, avoided giving a clear answer to a KOMMERSANT-DAILY correspondent's question as to "where the real threat to the Constitution comes from," noting that "it comes from right-wing and left-wing radicalism" but declining to give specific names. Zorkin answered other questions just as vaguely. Nonetheless, by making its morning decision the Constitutional Court managed to increase somewhat its standing among the public.

Yeltsin's 20 March Decree on Executive Work Published

OW2403133193 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1320 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Boris Yeltsin's Decree "On the work of the executive bodies pending the settlement of the power crisis," passed on March 20, was published in Moscow on Wednesday [24 March].

The preamble of this decree, quoted by the president's press service, says among other things, that the 8th Congress of People's Deputies did not pass resolutions on improving the system of state authority on the basis of delimitation of powers between the legislative, executive and judicial branches, all of which aggravates the economic and political crises in the country. Given this, the president announced that a number of urgent measures must be taken to stabilize the situation and create conditions under which reforms could be implemented efficiently.

With this end in view, a referendum on confidence in the president and on the draft Constitution and draft law on parliamentary elections was scheduled for April 25.

The document says that the president is taking all necessary measures to protect the constitutional system, based on the principles of democracy, federalism, republican form of government and division of powers.

The president's decree also guarantees the citizens' constitutional rights, freedoms and security, and ensures freedom of activity of all political parties, public organizations and movements except the ones which campaign for a forced change of the constitutional system and undermine Russia's integrity and state security.

In accordance with the decree, decisions taken by state bodies and officials, aimed at suspending the president's decrees and resolutions without a corresponding decision of the Constitutional Court, shall be qualified as juridically invalid.

Within five days, the government is to present a list of priority economic measures envisaging the procedure to allot plots of land to citizens, as well as measures to protect their rights during privatization, to support entrepreneurship, to check unemployment, to limit and exercise strict control over monetary emission, and to stabilize the ruble.

Ministries and departments have been instructed to work towards combating crime and preventing the media from circulating calls for a forced change in the constitutional system, to fight against the undermining of Russia's territorial integrity and for instigating ethnic, social and religious conflicts.

The president has charged the chief executives in the Russian Federation's constituent entities with the task of ensuring compliance to this decree.

The Russian Foreign Ministry has been instructed to inform other states and the UN that these measures must not be viewed as the introduction of a state of emergency.

The presidential decree went into effect immediately upon publication.

Political & Economic Issues

Yeltsin Warns Officials of 'Personal Accountability'

LD2303085593 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0820 GMT 23 Mar 93

[Text] Moscow, 23 Mar (ITAR-TASS)—The press service of the president of the Russian Federation has circulated a decree signed on 22 March "On the responsibility of officials and the executive power in the Russian Federation." In particular it says:

1. The chairman of the Council of Ministers—the Russian Federation Government—and the head of administration of the Russian Federation president are to verify, within two weeks, that decrees and resolutions issued by the president of the Russian Federation and resolutions and instructions issued by the Council of Ministers—the Russian Federation Government—are implemented and that officials carry out their responsibilities, and are to submit appropriate proposals.

2. The heads of executive power (presidents) of the Republics within the Russian Federation, the heads of administrations of krays, oblasts, autonomous oblasts, and the cities of Moscow and St. Petersburg are to investigate within a month cases of failure by subordinate officials of executive power and local administration to carry out their duties, and to take appropriate measures regarding their accountability, informing the president of the Russian Federation of this.

As head of executive power in the Russian Federation, I warn officials of the system of executive power who do not carry out their established duties, and equally those hindering the implementation of legislative acts of the Russian Federation, of their personal accountability to the president of the Russian Federation and to other top leaders of executive power.

Yeltsin's Decree on State Support for Electric Transport

LD2503095493 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0945 GMT 25 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS]

[Text] Moscow March 25 TASS—President Boris Yeltsin of the Russian Federation has signed a decree on state support for production plants manufacturing electrically-propelled railway and transport vehicles.

According to the presidential press service, the Russian State Committee for the Management of Property is instructed to establish a "Russian Electric Transport" joint-stock company (Roseltrans) before July 1.

The company will manufacture electrically-propelled vehicles, drawing interested investors, including foreign ones.

Yeltsin Signs Decree To Aid Invalids

LD2503103493 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0938 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Yext] Moscow, 25 Mar (ITAR-TASS)—Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin signed a decree today "On measures for the professional rehabilitation of and providing jobs for invalids." The president's press service reports that the document envisages the implementation of a range of steps and measures to set up a system of professional rehabilitation and to provide jobs for invalids, as well as to increase their social protection. According to the decree, the Russian Federal Employment Service is charged with studying the employment market for invalids and with developing proposals for a government policy in this sphere. Also, a number of ministries and departments of the Russian Federation have been given specific tasks for the purpose of implementing the provisions of the new decree.

The Coordination Committee for the Affairs of Invalids under the Russian Federation president has been given the task of supervizing the execution of this decree.

Yeltsin Releases Justice Minister From Post

LD2403172193 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1640 GMT 24 Mar 93

[by ITAR-TASS correspondent Ivan Ivanov]

[Text] Moscow, 24 March—Russian President Boris Yeltsin signed a decree today to release Nikolay Fedorov from the post of justice minister of the Russian Federation "at his request." ITAR-TASS learned this from sources in the Russian Government.

Council of Ministers Approves Priority Economic Measures

LD2503121193 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1058 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Report by ITAR-TASS correspondents Ivan Ivanov and Gennadiy Talalayev]

[Text] Moscow, 25 Mar—At its regular session today, the presidium of the Council of Ministers approved, in principle, the plan for priority economic measures during March-April, submitted by Deputy Prime Minister Boris Fedorov. The government had been instructed by Boris Yeltsin to draft this document in his decree entitled "activities of executive bodies aimed at surmounting the crisis of power," dated 20 March. The members of the Council of Ministers presidium decided to finalize a list of priority economic measures as quickly as possible, bearing in mind the proposals and additions suggested at today's meeting, and to forward the document to the president in the next two or three days.

Opening the meeting of the Council of Ministers presidium, First Deputy Prime Minister Vladimir Shumeyko, who chaired the session, stressed that the Government must do all it can to ensure that "these measures are actually carried out," adding that ministers would be held personally responsible for the implementation of decisions. He noted that the document which has been prepared "is not a correction to the course of reform, but merely a development, a more detailed version, of earlier programs."

Presenting a four-page list of priority economic measures, Deputy Prime Minister Boris Fedorov acknowledged how acute the economic and political situation in the country was and called on all members of the government "to work calmly and efficiently as a team."

The document, which was given to those who took part in the presidium session, contains specific measures which are to be implemented in the social sphere, privatization, the area of monetary, credits and financial policy, hard currency, and foreign economic policy.

The section dealing with the social sphere proposes that in the course of March and April a system of insuring the deposits of the population, held in any Russian banking establishments, should be set up; that interest rates in the Savings Bank [Sberbank] should be raised additionally, in order to protect the population from inflation; that compensation accounts should be opened in the Savings Bank system (first and foremost for the elderly and the poor) in order to partially make good the inflationary losses in the savings of citizens; to raise, from April, the minimal remuneration in the budget sphere to 4,500 rubles per month and to adopt a number of other measures.

Boris Fedorov explained that "a number of studies exist concerning the sale of a number of assets of the Russian Federation Committee for Precious Metals [the Russian Federation Committee for Precious Metals and Precious Stones] for instance of coins to the value of four hundred billion rubles." Measures in the social sphere would thus be financed. In the area of privatization, it is proposed, in particular, to introduce a simplified procedure for giving citizens plots of land, to shorten the duration of the moratorium on the sale of land plots, to introduce a tax on their sales, to organize a system of mortgaging land plots, to work out organizational and legal procedures for registering real estate ownership rights and to prepare presidential decrees on the guarantees of private ownership rights and on ensuring the rights of citizens within the privatization process.

In monetary and credit policy in March and April, it is proposed to introduce without delay a new official Central Bank interest rate of eight percent per month for all categories of borrowers, to set strict limits on the growth of Central Bank credits, to end all forms of granting crdits and transfers of cash to CIS countries without drawing up inter-state agreements, to provide for the allocation to agriculture of credits of 300 billion rubles on advantageous terms in March-April for the spring sowing work.

The government also proposes to adopt a decision on additional measures to reduce the budget deficit, to increase the effectiveness of state expenditure, to introduce stiffer fines for violating tax legislation, to considerably reduce subsidies for centralized imports, and to intensify customs and currency controls.

The list of primary economic measures contains provisions to halt discrimination against the ruble in Russia's internal turnover, to support the course of the ruble by all means of economic policy, to create a National Fund for stabilizing the ruble rate from existing resources, from part of the International Bank of Reconstruction and Development credit and from a number of international credits (a total of $2-3 billion). The government also intends to announce a six-month postponement of all payments on its external debts while the emergency stabilization measures are being undertaken.

During the discussion, which took more than two hours, on a list of immediate economic measures Vice Prime Minister Georgiy Khizha underlined that "we are now on the threshold of a new increase in prices and inflation" and said that "the document does not cause any objections except a catastrophic incompleteness." He offered to insert two more sections into it—on government policy on prices and on setting up a system of management of state property and state enterprises.

Viktor Gerashchenko, the chairman of the Central Bank, said that the document will be considered today at the board of directors of the bank. Its decisions will be sent to the government.

Some ministers made statements about problems in their branches of the economy. In this connection, Vladimir Shumeyko underlined the importance of the document and said that "the government is a political body and not a gathering of representatives of branches."

Deputy Prime Minister Predicts Severe Harvest Loss

LD2503103393 Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian 0600 GMT 25 Mar 93

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] Last year, 34 billion rubles were set aside from the budget for the development of private farming. This year, capital investment from central sources will amount to 94 billion rubles. Support for the farmers is two-pronged: the organization of infrastructure, and preferential credits. These data were cited at a news conference given by Aleksandr Zaveryukha, Russian deputy prime minister in charge of agriculture.

In his view, the continuing decline in agricultural production is much more dangerous than the same trends in

industry. Thus, the shortage of fertilizers, experienced last year, will grow by a further 40 percent this year. In all likelihood, up to half the grain harvest will be lost owing to this.

The main scourge of agriculture now is the lack of money. Currently, 3-4 million tonnes of grain harvested last year has been kept by producers, who are holding on to it because they are not satisfied with the prices for what they produce. Income fails to cover expenditure.

Central Bank Said Beholden to Government, Parliament

MK2503080893 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 24 Mar 93 p 8

["Banks Desk" commentary: "Central Bank Eases Into the Role of Serving Two Masters"]

[Excerpt] Last week was a restless one in the Central Bank. The conflict between the government and the Supreme Soviet put the bank's chiefs in a patently awkward position. Accountable to the Supreme Soviet by law, the Central Bank "delegated" Viktor Gerashchenko to sit on the Council of Ministers Presidium and thereby without choice made itself dependent on the government's concept of credit policy. In the meantime, the introduction of the special rule arrangements, which make all the decisions of the executive power inviolate, has not relieved the Central Bank of its duty to account for its actions before the Supreme Soviet.

Despite the political discomfort, the Central Bank's creativity in the legislative sphere were quite fruitful last week. Among the more important documents the bank drafted, experts single out the draft laws "On a Securities Market" and "On Investment Securities."

Viktor Gerashchenko will probably have to use all his diplomatic talents not to fall into disgrace with either of his two masters while keeping his image of an apolitical banker. Protecting his professional reputation may prove far more vital for Mr. Gerashchenko. The fact is, the program of compensation for the population's monetary deposits, pushed by both the government and the Supreme Soviet in their own ways, would require, according to the estimates of both, an issuing of money totaling several trillion rubles. In addition to that, let us recall, the government recently asked the Central Bank for 10 trillion rubles to provide credit for the priority sectors. The issue of additional money, in the view of experts, would create conditions for an avalanche-like collapse of the ruble, the logical continuation of which could be the impeachment of the heads of the bank. Meanwhile, Viktor Gerashchenko's refusal to "feed" inflation will create a situation reminiscent of what happened to Georgiy Matyukhin. The intractability of the Central Bank's ex-chairman at the time of issuing credits to the government and the Supreme Soviet made Mr. Matyukhin unwanted by either. [passage omitted]

Military & Space Issues

Defense Minister Outlines New Naval Strategy

MK2303133093 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 20 Mar 93 p 10

[Aleksander Stukalin report: "Russian Navy To Get New Ships"]

[Text] Yesterday General of the Army Pavel Grachev, defense minister, continued his inspection of the Northern Fleet. Over the past year inspection tours of the armed forces by top command and headquarters personnel have become more frequent.

The defense minister prefers to inspect the major army groups personally. Grachev has already visited the Volga, the North Caucasus, and the Moscow districts, the first of which was selected as the base for creating Russian mobile forces (analogous to the U.S. Rapid Deployment Forces), and the two latter are undergoing substantial reorganization as part of their transformation from rear districts to first-echelon districts.

The Northern Fleet remains the most powerful operational and strategic naval group in the Russian Armed Forces. It comprises the largest group of vessels, including all Russia's six nuclear Tayfun- type submarines each with 20 3M20 (SS-N-20) ballistic missiles aboard, and also all the operational aircraft-carrying cruisers in the Navy: the Admiral Kuznetsov, the Kiev, and the Admiral Gorshkov. The Fleet performs combat missions in the waters of northern seas, the Atlantic, and the Mediterranean.

In the course of his meetings with Fleet admirals and officers, Pavel Grachev stressed that the ocean and sea flank salients continue to remain the most vulnerable in terms of ensuring Russia's defense interests. Given Russia's loss of operational positions in the Baltic and the Black Sea, the tasks assigned to the Northern Fleet may grow considerably in the immediate future. According to Grachev, in these circumstances Russia should orient itself toward maintaining a Navy capable of serving as an effective instrument of its foreign policy and ensuring the defense of the state's economic interests. Two concepts will underlie Russia's new sea strategy: a peacetime concept, based on naval containment of potential adversaries; and a wartime concept, providing for the organization of an adequate defense of the coast and sea communications and stopping potential aggression.

According to Grachev, the main directions for the development of the Fleet in 1993-1995 will be its rational reduction and the adjustment of its structures to the contemporary military-political situation. Priority will be given to the construction of new- generation submarines. The building of ships and support vessels that already started at Russian and Ukrainian shipyards will continue. In particular, in St. Petersburg the nuclear-powered missile cruiser Petr Velikiy (formerly Andropov), the last in the Kirov-class series, will be

completed. In the future there are plans to build (solely at Russian enterprises) advanced new- generation ships in limited series, equipped with high-precision weapons. The Sovremennyy-class updated destroyer project is considered to be the most probable option.

Pavel Grachev's trip is expected to end on 20 March. KOMMERSANT- DAILY will report on its results on Tuesday, 23 March.

Navy Chief Says Fleet To Be Cut 20% in Two Years

MK2403073493 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 23 Mar 93 p 10

[Aleksandr Stukalin report: "Pavel Grachev Inspects Fleet. Russian Fleet To Be Cut 20 Percent"]

[Text] On the night of 19 and 20 March Russian Defense Minister Army General Pavel Grachev returned to Moscow after completing his inspection tour of the Russian Northern Fleet facilities, which KOMMERSANT-DAILY reported in its 19 March issue. Observers note that during this trip the Russian military leadership's plans regarding the modernization of the country's fleet were specified.

Before completing the inspection, Admiral Feliks Gromov, commander-in-chief of the Russian Navy, who accompanied Grachev on his trip to the North, stated that within the next two years the fleet will be cut by 20 percent. At the same time, quantitative cuts will be countervailed by better qualitative characteristics.

In particular, it is proposed to arm ships with high-precision cruise missiles and state-of-the-art air defense systems. KOMMERSANT-DAILY experts believe that what is meant is updated anti- ship SS-22 missiles and the Klinok, Shtil, and Rif (Fort-M) air defense missile systems, that have become operational in the Navy over the past few years.

According to the commander-in-chief, Pavel Grachev believes it necessary to arm the Navy with aircraft carriers for it to be able to perform strategic tasks. Each of the four Russian fleets should have at least three such ships even though at present there are only four of them.

On the last day of his stay with the fleet, Pavel Grachev, while on board the Admiral Levchenko anti-submarine ship, which was at her moorings, suddenly ordered the ship's captain to weigh anchor and set out for open sea. A task assigned to the crew was to make emergency preparations for conventional (nonnuclear) warfare. The crew's reaction was like that of a fairly well-oiled machine—all the operations were performed faster than the established time standards.

On the late evening of 19 March the minister left by plane for Moscow, where he literally in a matter of hours came into the focus of the Russian parliamentarians' attention in connection with the events that followed Boris Yeltsin's Saturday address.

Problems of Northern Fleet Nuclear Submarines Viewed

LD2303144393 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1355 GMT 19 Mar 93

[From "Point on the Map—the Kola region" documentary]

[Text] [Ye. B. Komarov, head of administration of Murmansk Oblast] When speaking of the problems of our Murmansk Oblast, it is impossible not to mention the problems which exist in the Northern Fleet, for any problem of the Northern Fleet is a problem of the oblast and of our inhabitants. The Fleet fulfills tasks which are vital the state. The Fleet is battle-worthy. The Fleet is ready to fulfill the tasks facing it.

Nevertheless there are problems, especially from the point of view of the salvaging and processing of nuclear submarines which have become defective and have gone out of operation. We are here at one of the yards of the Northern Fleet in which, as you can see, there are a few submarines lying around. What will happen to them, what is being done and which are the ways of the situation which has arisen, has so far not been determined.

[V.A. Miroshnichenko, director of the ship repair yard] The yard can reduce the time of work on the first stage, the so-called preparations for ship salvaging. However, because of insufficient funds and the dispersal of technical equipment, this task is not yet being tackled.

[Komarov] If we have started speaking of financing to keep these submarines seaworthy, the Fleet is forced to spend 1 billion rubles annually. There are Fleet personnel here and you understand what the problem is today as regards personnel in the Army and Navy. But the Fleet is forced to send people, officers, warrant officers and sailors here for a submarine to be seaworthy and at the same time, to spend such a large quantity of money, and at the same time, the Fleet, because of the lack of financing, will not be able to repair the ships in operation which need repairing. In this way we inflict damage on the Fleet from the point of view of battle-readiness.

If this probem were to be resolved, we could channel this money into ship repair, that is to say, provide our ship repair yards with work. This is one aspect of the matter.

Another aspect of the matter is that the question is being raised quite correctly that this is a state problem and this problem should be approached at state level. This is not the problem of the Fleet, this is a problem for the oblast - it requires a solution at the level of the government. I am unable to say that the government is not dealing with this matter. Many decisions have already been taken

repeatedly. But, for the time being, very regrettably, these decisions have shown no results - they have not been really implemented.

[Unidentified interviewer] Yevgeniy Borisovich, but the problem also is that today no place has been set aside for disposal of solid and liquid radioactive waste. After all, until such a place has been found, is it also impossible to strip these nuclear submarines?

[Komarov] Yes, indeed, today, apart from instructions of the government and president and the corresponding commissions and committees of the Supreme Soviet, to date the problem has indeed not been resolved.

[Interviewer] Are the reactors in these nuclear submarines, which, alas, are no longer in operation, in working condition?

[Miroshnichenko] They are not now in working condition. They have been taken out of operation and are being maintained at a certain level.

[Interviewer] Nevertheless, there is fuel here?

[Miroshnichenko] Yes.

[Interviewer] If we were talking only of these four submarines. But there are not even 24. There are far more of them.

Uncertainty About Pacific Fleet Chief's Dismissal

MK2403073893 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 20 Mar 93 p 10

[Vladimir Savvin report: "Pavel Grachev Inspects Fleet. It Took a Week for an Order From Moscow To Reach Vladivostok"]

[Text] Late on the evening of 18 March the first channel of Ostankino Television carried a report that created confusion in the Russian military establishment. An announcer on the TSN television news service said that Admiral Gennadiy Khvatov, commander of the Pacific Fleet, refuted the report about his dismissal distributed a week ago through all official channels. Following that incident, the Russian Defense Ministry had to issue special clarifications.

The order by Russian Defense Minister Pavel Grachev, which KOMMERSANT-DAILY reported on 16 March, called for Gennadiy Khvatov to be dismissed from his job "for unsatisfactory organizational work and lack of control over the activity of officials."

The actual reason for the admiral's dismissal was a sharp outburst of acute illnesses (pneumonia, gastritis, dystrophy, and intestinal infections) among seamen recruited in the spring of 1992 who served in the garrison on the Pacific island of Russkiy. Malnutrition, violations of sanitation standards, and loose control over the newly arrived seamen's health resulted in the deaths of four people; another 31 were hospitalized and are currently being treated on board the hospital ships Ob and Yenisey.

Initially, the fleet command tried to lay the blame for the event on the oblast enlistment offices, which allegedly worked inadequately and sent to the fleet recruits suffering from "chronic underweight." A special commission from Moscow under Colonel General Vladimir Toporov, however, drew diametrically opposed conclusions. It was the findings of the commission that resulted in Khvatov's dismissal from his job, and initially he had no objection.

That is why TSN's report that the dismissed admiral was not aware of the defense minister's order really shocked both those concerned and outside observers. KOMMERSANT-DAILY experts believe that Khvatov was right de facto, and the fleet is still under his command. One explanation for this is that his dismissal proved a surprise for Grachev too, and for this reason no replacement has yet been found.

De jure, however, he is dismissed, and the Defense Ministry officially reaffirmed yesterday that the above order by Grachev did exist. Explaining the incident, Defense Ministry spokesmen advanced a theory which is fairly strange, in KOMMERSANT-DAILY experts' view: The order was allegedly delayed on its way from Moscow to Vladivostok and found its way to the commander's desk only on 19 March.

'Raduga' Commo Satellite Launched for Defense Ministry

LD2503100293 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0944 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Report by ITAR-TASS correspondent Veronika Romanenkova]

[Text] Moscow, 25 Mar—Today at 0528 hours Moscow time [0228 GMT], in the interests of the Russian Federation Defense Ministry, a "Raduga" communications satellite was launched by a "Proton" carrier rocket from the Baykonur cosmodrome.

Plesetsk To Launch Satellite From Refitted ICBM

LD2503121893 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1100 GMT 25 Mar 93

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] It is planned to launch a satellite from an intercontinental ballistic missile this evening from the Plesetsk cosmodrome. Within the framework of the national conversion program, the modernized missile will serve strictly peaceful aims and will be the first launch using a refitted intercontinental ballistic missile. This project is not being financed by state structures.

Regional Affairs

Chelyabinsk Oblast Initiates Support Plan for Cossacks

LD2403155493 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1000 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Text] The administration of Chelyabinsk Oblast has started to fulfill the decree of the president of the Russian Federation on state support for the Cossacks. The first gathering of atamans of Cossack organizations in the region, supported by the executive bodies of power, started in the oblast center today. About 100 supervisors of Cossack subunits will hear economists' lectures, meet heads of management and committees of oblast administration, and learn about their ancestors' historical and cultural traditions.

Rostov Cossacks Accused of 'Striving for Power'

LD2403203293 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1902 GMT 24 Mar 93

[by ITAR-TASS correspondent Vyacheslav Bondarenko]

[Text] Rostov on Don, 24 March—The heads of the legislative and executive authorities of Rostov oblast today commented on the Major Council of the Union of Cossacks of the territory of the Don army which has made the decision to announce the setting up of a national-state formation on the Don as a subject of the Russian Federation with autonomy rights. The heads of the oblast authorities said that Cossack leaders are striving for power. They called on the electorate to remain calm and gave assurances that the appropriate measures have been taken to put an end to the attempts to violate the Russian constitution and that the oblast procuracy has instructed the Security Ministry directorate for Rostov oblast to investigate whether the latest decisions of the Major Council are in accord with the Russian constitution.

This was stated during the appearance today on local television of Aleksandr Popov, chairman of the Rostov oblast soviet, and Vladimir Chub, head of the oblast administration. Their appearance was devoted to the reasons for the exacerbation of the political situation on the Don.

Shaymiyev: Presidential Rule Not To Apply to Republics

PM2403151693 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 24 Mar 93 First Edition p 1

[Interview with Tatarstan President Mintimer Shaymiyev by Dmitriy Mikhaylin in Kazan under general heading "Political and Public Figures Discuss President's Appeal"; date of interview not given: "We Live and Will Continue To Live According to Our Own Constitution"]

[Text] [Mikhaylin] How do you assess the present political situation in Moscow?

[Shaymiyev] This is a continuation of the confrontation that emerged at the Seventh Congress. Unfortunately, the subsequent Congress did away with the fragile consensus that was achieved at the Seventh. It could have been preserved—if only because, in view of the regions' opinion that holding a referendum is premature, the matter should have been dropped from the decision of the December Congress on holding the Eighth Congress of People's Deputies. I think it would then have been possible to avoid this still more vigorous spiral of confrontation. Especially since the government received additional powers.

As for President Yeltsin's intentions, he is entitled to put to the people the question of confidence in himself. I see nothing wrong with that. And all the conditions must be created to enable him to do so.

But as for the other questions he is proposing to put to the 25 April referendum—on the basic principles of the Constitution and on the federal parliament—my opinion differs. If they are to be discussed, it should only be after careful preparation, not headlong.

[Mikhaylin] What do you think about observations to the effect that the constitutional crisis in the Russian leadership is provoking separatist trends in the regions, and particularly the republics? For instance, becasue they will not want direct presidential rule over them?

[Shaymiyev] We do not think the imposition of direct presidential rule in the regions applies to the republics. We have lived, live, and will continue to live according to our own Constitution. In general our position on this point is as follows: Whatever may happen over there in Moscow, we are in favor of the integrity of the Russian Federation.

Tatar President Comments on Authority Conflict

OW2403212693 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1947 GMT 24 Mar 93

["Exclusive" interview with Mintimer Shaymiyev, president of Tatarstan and a deputy to the 8th Congress of Peoples Deputies; date and place not given—item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Some of the political scientists believe that the true winners of the 8th congress of people's deputies were the heads of the Russian Federation's republics, territories and regions. In experts' estimate, the aggregate "weight" of the local leaders has considerably exceeded that of all the parliamentary factions taken together. Today, Interfax talks with People's Deputy of the Russian Federation, President of Tatarstan, Mintimer Shaymiyev, about the results of the congress and its possible consequences.

IF [INTERFAX]: How would you assess the main results of the 8th congress of people's deputies?

SHAYMIYEV: The results of the congress are rather depressing. Unfortunately, our hopes that it would strengthen the fragile agreement between the two branches of authority, reached during the 7th congress last December, were not justified. The strain has not been removed. On the contrary, it has become even worse.

President Yeltsin failed to ensure that the question of the referendum be considered separately and that it be removed from the congress's draft resolution. That was his worst mistake. In fact, the second article of this document's final variant reduced the December agreements to naught. In the president-proposed draft, the question of the referendum went together with the powers, granted to him by the 7th congress. It was absolutely clear that most of the deputies would oppose the referendum and, automatically, turn down the rest of the president' proposals. This is exactly what happened during the 8th congress.

Unfortunately, Yeltsin made one more error. The Council of the Heads of the Russian Federation's Republics expressed its unanimous opposition to the referendum, and so did the leaders of the territories and regions. During a soft voting, the resolution, drafted on the basis of the statement by the leaders of the republics, scored more than 500 votes - 100 less votes than the basic documents, but more votes than the president-proposed one. If Yeltsin had combined his draft with ours, excluding the referendum issue and not insisting on holding it immediately (he did consider such a possibility), the votes would not have split. Undoubtedly, the majority of the votes would have been cast for a decision leading to a genuine stabilization of the constitutional system. The draft, proposed by the Council of the Heads of the Republics, envisaged ways of improving the mechanism of implementing the Federation Treaty and considerably broadened the question raised during the congress. Given this, the principles of the constitution might have been subsequently coordinated with the subjects of the Federation. However, this proposal was also rejected by the congress. The chance was missed.

Disagreements between the regions and the federal bodies were not settled. So, if they evolve into a conflict, the consequences will be extremely serious. The government has received additional powers which, in principle, are sufficient for implementing the reforms in the conditions of political stability. However, rivalry between the branches of authority continues.

IF: Do you think the president will not accept the results of the congress and make steps to strengthen his positions?

SHAYMIYEV: The most dangerous thing now would be to look for enemies. I'm convinced - I spoke about this during the congress - that a government, supported by the president and by the parliament, might act as a link between both branches of authority. This factor should not be neglected and the government must be given an opportunity to carry out the reforms.

IF: Do you think the conflict between different branches of authority may affect the regions and breed conflicts in the periphery?

SHAYMIYEV: No, I don't. The Moscow politicians' forecasts surprized me very much. The regions are busy tackling different problems, displaying a lot more common sense than the center. During the congress, representatives of the republics and regions defined this position in clear terms. This is a very serious factor which cannot be disregarded. Generally speaking, the president, the chairman of the parliament and the prime minister should pay more attention to the opinion of the republic leaders which reflects the interests of the people, not the ambitions of individual politicians. Particularly now.

If the Russian leaders relied more on the regions, the pressure put on them by different parties and movements in a bid to influence both the president and the parliament, would not be that strong.

As to the conflicts which have flared up in some of the regions, they have nothing to do with the developments in Moscow. They reflect people's attitude to incompetent leaders and show how they are making their choice..

IF: The growing influence of the Council of the Heads of the Republics has alarmed the deputies. Some of them even expressed doubt about the legitimacy of this body, saying that it is evolving into an alternative power structure.

SHAYMIYEV: Even if the Council of the Heads of the Republics has no juridical status, the congress has to take its opinion into account. The voting on the draft, proposed by the Council, showed that its opinion is not neglected and that it has a great deal of rational matter in it. It is very difficult to find the right bearings without taking it into account. Today, many of the deputies express the views of different political factions rather than the people.

IF: During the congress and after it, many expressed the belief that the long-drawn-out conflict in Moscow may lead to the Federation's break-up. What would you say about such a prospect?

SHAYMIYEV: Such statements reflect further attempts to fan tensions, to shape an opinion, oriented to an even deeper crisis, not to stabilization, and to provoke the president to further action.

The position of Tatarstan, and, I believe, other republics, does not change depending on the moods in Moscow. I also consider such statements to be an attempt to cast a shadow on the Council of the Heads of the Republics which proposed the idea of drafting a law on the implementation of the Federation Treaty. Can such an initiative cause the Federation's break-up? In fact, it is the

congress that should be blamed for rejecting the draft law and doubting the expediency of the Federation Treaty.

The leaders of the territories and regions supported the Council and agreed that a procedure of implementing the Federation Treaty should be worked out. But there were deputies who opposed the independence of the regions.

IF: Why were the leaders of the republics so categorically against the idea of a referendum?

SHAYMIYEV: Because no one can guarantee that its results will not be diametrically different from the expected ones. If the people say "No", the crisis will become even more serious. I think that in the given situation, one should seek ways of attaining accord. But if we fail to do so, there is only one thing we must do - to hold early parliamentary and presidential elections.

Ingushetia's Aushev Sees Troop Issue Resolved After 31 Mar

LD2403150893 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1310 GMT 24 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Mikhail Shevtsov]

[Text] Nazran, 24 Mar—After 31 March, when the period of the state of emergency in North Ossetia and Ingushetia expires, the issue of the withdrawal of Russian troops from the territory of the Ingush Republic will be resolved, Ingushetia'a President Ruslan Aushev told an ITAR-TASS correspondent today. He also said that "all problems related to the deterioration of the situation" in this region "were discussed in detail" at a meeting today between the leadership of the provisional administration in the state of the emergency zone and the military commanders of the Russian Army and internal troops subunits.

An understanding has been reached for the duration of the Islamic festival of Navruz—which started today—that personnel at three checkpoints situated in Ingushetia will stand down. It is being recommended that there be a "relaxed regime" for the passage of motor transport at the other checkpoints. The republic's Vice President Boris Agapov is holding further talks with the Russian military.

The headquarters of the provisional administration has reported that last night was relatively quiet in Ingushetia.

Further on Interior Forces

OW2403180993 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1709 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] A decision has not yet been reached on the further presence of Russian Internal Affairs Ministry domestic troops in the Nazran Region of Ingushetia for supporting the state of emergency, reported the domestic troops chief headquarters to INTERFAX. According to an earlier plan, units in the Nazran Region and the Prigorodnyy Region of North Ossetia are supposed to be replaced at the end of March.

Earlier, President Ruslan Aushev of Ingushetia reported that the situation in the Nazran Region had been normalized and said he believed there was no longer any need for the presence of additional domestic troops, since the republic could fulfill their function with their own forces.

In an interview with Interfax, Aushev's press secretary said that "the presence of units and divisions of Russian troops on the territory of the Republic of Ingushetia is becoming a destabilizing factor in what is already a difficult situation in the republic." He said soldiers and officers, through their behavior and their numerous legal violations, had discredited themselves in the eyes of the people. Under these conditions, the urgent withdrawal of troops is becoming extremely necessary, stressed the press secretary.

However, the domestic troops chief command believes domestic troops are still needed in the state of emergency zone, since "there is definite tension in Ossetian-Ingush relations and with the coming of spring an escalation of the conflict cannot be ruled out."

Situation in North Ossetia, Ingushetia Reported

LD2403162093 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1509 GMT 24 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Valery Shanayev]

[Text] Vladikavkaz March 24 TASS—The North Ossetian Supreme Soviet today discussed two important problems, affecting the Republic's socio-political life.

The Russian president's decree announcing a state of emergency on the territory of the North Ossetian Republic and Ingushetia expires on March 31. However, the situation in the area remains difficult. Taking into account the requests received from the people's councils of the Prigorodny, Mozdok and Pravoberezhny Districts of the Republic, and from the Vladikavkaz City Council to prolong the state of emergency, the North Ossetian parliament has decided to ask the president of the Russian Federation to prolong it in the southern part of Vladikavkaz, in Mozdok District, and in several populated localities in the Pravoberezhny and Prigorod. Districts of North Ossetia from 14.00 hours on March 31, 1993, to 14.00 hours on May 31, 1993.

The session also heard a report by First Vice-Chairman of the North Ossetian Supreme Soviet Yuriy Biragov on the north ossetian and ingushetian official talks in kislovodsk, which were mediated by representatives from Dagestan and Stavropol territory. The sides had discussed problems linked with the return of refugees and people forcibly evicted from their homes.

In the meantime, according to information received from the headquarters of the interim administration, the situation in North Ossetia and Ingushetia remains complicated. The situation in the armed conflict zone is fully controlled by the Russian peace-keeping force. But the criminogenic situation remains alarming. For instance, four unidentified men walked up to an Army vehicle, parked outside the State Bank in Nazran (the Ingush Republic) on March 23 and captured two Kalashnikov submachine-guns and two service pistols from two Russian militiamen, who were in the cabin. Threatened by a grenade, the militiamen were compelled to surrender their weapons.

The Russian Interior Ministry's investigation team has confiscated since March 22 twelve units of firearms, several grenades and other explosive devices, hundreds of rounds of ammunition and two transceivers in the villages of North Ossetia and Ingushetia.

A Russian investigation team, checking the banking and crediting system of the Ingush Republic, has brought to light in the period from March 17 to 22 as many as thirteen cases when forged documents were presented to Russian banks (4 in Moscow, 5 in Tyumen, 3 in Khabarovsk and 1 in Saratov) with the intention of embezzling 5,621,667,000 roubles.

Ossetia-Ingushetia Talks Lead to Refugee Agreement

LD2403144993 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1100 GMT 24 Mar 93

[By I. Gurkayeva from Valdikavkaz; from the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] The latest round of Ossetia-Ingushetia talks in Kislovodsk has led to an agreement whereby both sides are to begin tackling the problems of refugees and people who have been forcibly evicted. Areas of permanent residence have been agreed upon, as have security issues. The security of refugees and everyone living in the area is being looked after by Russian troops. These young men, by the will of fate, have ended up in a flashpoint and are trying to bring back to our land, if not a permanent peace, then at least a degree of calm.

[Begin recording of A. Kotenkov, head of the provisional administration] After everything that has happened, it would be naive to hope that within a few weeks or months we will manage to restore it all to what it was before. But the state of emergency zone will be narrowed down; that is, there will be a greater concentration of troops, but it will be in places where the situation is most explosive. [end recording]

Chechnya Oil Scandal, Power Struggle Viewed

PM2403133593 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 20 Mar 93 p 3

[L. Krutakov article: "Oil Stains on the General's Uniform. Can the Chechen President Prove He Is Not Involved in the Shady Transactions of His Entourage?"]

[Text] As he emerged from the doorway of his house in Groznyy Tuesday, Gennadiy Sanko was fatally wounded in a burst of automatic fire; he died two hours later in the hospital without regaining consciousness. The CHECHEN-PRESS news agency, which never lets slip the slightest opportunity to accuse the Russian special services of conducting sabotage operations on the republic's territory, did not breathe a word about the death of the chief of the Republic of Chechnya Council of Ministers Department for Oil Product Shipments. The fact that this murder has been hushed up, which seems so strange at first glance, can be attributed precisely to Sanko's position.

The death of one of Chechnya's oil generals is just one link in a whole chain of events that has been unfolding since the beginning of March. The starting point of the conflict was the murder of the Utsiyev brothers in London. The culmination is a report on Chechen oil deliveries made for foreign currency, prepared by staff at the Republic of Chechnya Security Ministry Department for Fighting Organized Crime, which was submitted to the parliament a week ago. Sanko's murder will surely not be the last event in the ongoing Chechen internal shakedown over the oil. In the heat of the argument over the Republic of Chechnya's sovereignty we have somehow forgotten that Chechnya is a kind of Russian Kuwait. And wherever there is oil, games are played for high stakes.

The report prepared by the Republic of Chechnya Security Ministry uncovers shady transactions on a massive scale involving Chechen oil. At the head of all this stood Yaragi Mamodayev, first vice premier of the Republic of Chechnya Government and effectively head of the Cabinet of Ministers, and Sanko as the administrator directly involved. So as not to bore the reader with figures, let me briefly convey the essence of the document.

Enormous consignments of oil products were released on Mamodayev's personal orders to various joint ventures and commercial organizations which then reexported the oil abroad using third parties. The lion's share of the foreign currency income from these deals worth millions (again on the personal orders of Mamodayev) was transferred to the accounts of other joint ventures or remained in the account of the immediate partner in the deal. The republic received at best 5 percent, but more often than not it got nothing at all. One deal alone with the Soviet-Libyan "Madzhess" [name as transliterated] enterprise netted $4.5 million, and of this only $200,000 was spent by the Ministry of Agriculture on purchasing hardware in the Netherlands.

Oil products were sold at prices approximately 30 percent lower than world prices. The total debit balance of Chechnya's oil refineries, which shipped out their output on Mamodayev's say-so, amounted to $5 billion at CIS prices by the end of the year.

Officially the report has not yet been given a reading in the Chechen parliament and only exists in orders of business, but it is already having a significant impact on political life (and not just political life) in Chechnya and among its neighbors. According to one version the Utsiyev brothers, who were in London to carry out Dudayev's instruction to place orders at local enterprises for the manufacture of Republic of Chechnya passports and money, were using money obtained through Mamodayev's shady oil deals.

One very interesting coincidence: The murder of the Utsiyev brothers practically coincided with a speech delivered by Mamodayev on Groznyy television in which he accused Dzhokhar Dudayev of causing the total collapse of the government. Mamodayev, a man who is extremely well informed about what goes on in the republic, could not fail to know about the document that was being prepared inside the Security Ministry. It is entirely possible that the "loose ends" of the London murder will surface in Groznyy.

Immediately after the publication of the report (about a week after his television speech), Mamodayev disappeared—he has not shown up at work for a week now. I was told in the Chechen parliament that he is undergoing treatment in Moscow. Gennadiy Sanko no longer needs medical services.

Dzhokhar Dudayev's reaction to these events is extremely revealing. Habitually so considerate and responsive in his dealings with the press, the Republic of Chechnya president has on three occasions refused to speak with the KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA editorial office, letting it be known via his assistant Mavlen Salamov that he knows nothing about any such document. Nor was a reference to NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA, which published some figures from the report three days before its publication, very helpful—it was said that the newspapers do not reach Groznyy. And this from a man who has frequently made statements about having "my own people" in the Kremlin and the Lubyanka.

It is still correct to say that that Caesar's wife has to be above suspicion—God forbid that Dudayev's name should be mixed up in the oily affairs of his closest associate Mamodayev, even if, as it seems to us, Dudayev had nothing personally to do with these deals.

Although, as has been stated in the the Republic of Chechnya parliament, the oil corruption affair is only indirectly associated—if at all—with the standoff between the executive and legislative authorities in Chechnya, there is no doubt who the main "target" is. First of all, without authorization from the power structures, the Republic of Chechnya Security Ministry would not have decided to "investigate" the republic's number two; and second, a copy of the document arrived at a number of newspapers, including our own, almost simultaneously.

KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA has already written about the Chechen president's criminal entourage. It seems likely that the people who helped Dudayev to ensconce himself in power will be the ones to discredit him. Observers have frequently noted the similarity of the processes occurring in Groznyy and in Moscow, with the latter lagging somewhat behind the former. So there would seem to be something to ponder in the Kremlin as well.

Finally, one other piece of information to think about. The Republic of Chechnya Security Ministry's report names Ilichevsk and Odessa as the main ports for shipping out the illicit oil. Could it be that the flotsam of yet another affair—that of the tanker barges plying the Danube to Serbia—will also surface in Groznyy?...

International Affairs

President Kravchuk on Impact of Russian 'Instability'

LD2403194093 Kiev Ukrayinske Telebachennya Network in Ukrainian 1700 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Excerpts] A meeting was held today between Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk, Ukrainian entrepreneurs, and representatives of the Union of Independent Entrepreneurs of Ukraine. [passage omitted]

[Begin recording] [Unidentified correspondent] Leonid Makarovych Kravchuk, what is your opinion on what sort of influence the events in Russia will have on market transformations in Ukraine, on the reform of our economy? Just now, at the meeting, you again repeated that you are an adherent of such reforms. Its quite a difficult situation which could, for example, hamper cooperation.

[Kravchuk] You know, it is probably difficult to speak at present about some definite consequences. But one can already say that instability in the country will without doubt have an effect, first of all for Russia itself. Therefore, when I made an appeal and when I had a telephone conversation with Russian President Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin, I asked him, perhaps having some moral right to do this and based on the fact that Ukraine and Russia are closely connected with each other, that Ukraine and Russia, regardless of what it was like over there—we know various points of view-but for 350 years we lived in one thought, one creative and organizational system, and now more than 11 million citizens of Ukraine who are of Russian origin, who are Russians, live in Ukraine—all this gave me the right to say to Boris Nikolayevich that I would very much like them to find a mutual understanding.

I also said this to Khasbulatov when I had a meeting with him here, because any other option is instability, and instability above all will give rise to difficulties in Russia itself. And as we are connected with it, it will reflect also on our problems which are so acute already. We would not like any other solution for ourselves. But this is already the affair of...[changes thought] and our influence on this Russian problem can only be indirect. This is our wish, our moral support of stability, these are our appropriate actions, so that we do not hinder by our steps and economic decisions or rather we do not create additional difficulties for Russian entrepreneurs and for Russia as a whole. [end recording]

Denies Crisis To Affect Nuclear Status

OW2403211093 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2020 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Ukraine will not change its stand on global problems such as nuclear disarmament, its territorial integrity, or human rights as soon as the situation in some region changes, President Kravchuk said at a meeting with representatives of the Ukrainian League of Independent Entrepreneurs in Kiev. He made it clear that "our attitude to a region may change but our approach to such problems cannot." The president denied reports on a possible change in Ukraine's nuclear status in response to a change in the Russian situation.

Kravchuk said that when he had a telephone talk with the Russian president he invited Boris Yeltsin to visit Ukraine in order to discuss a number of outstanding issues. Yeltsin accepted the invitation but no date has been agreed upon.

Zlenko on Growing Opposition to Giving Up Nuclear Arms

LD2503104393 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 0900 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Text] Ukrainian Foreign Minister Zlenko stated at the talks on nuclear disarmanent in Washington that the crisis in Russia had had a negative effect on political support for the elimination of nuclear weapons in Ukraine. Addressing THE WASHINGTON POST staff, he said that because of the unclear situation in Russia there was growing opposition in the Ukrainian parliament to the government decision to renounce nuclear weapons.

Official on Use of Former Soviet Air Force Heavy Bombers

OW2403175693 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1710 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] "Ukraine does not intend to enter into a military alliance with Russia or to load its 'heavy bombers' with the tactical nuclear warheads that were handed over to Russia in May 1992. This is why there is no danger any more that these aircraft will be used as strategic bombers," Vadim Dolganov, Counsellor for Political Affairs of the Ukrainian embassy in Moscow told Interfax Wednesday [24 March].

He was surprised by the statement made by the Russian air force CINC [commander in chief] that "privatization" of some former USSR's Tu-95 and Tu-160 "heavy bombers" by Ukraine significantly undermines the defense capability of Russia and the CIS.

The counsellor thinks that there can be "no misunderstanding" over the aircraft which used to carry nuclear missiles in the USSR's air force and were strategic bombers. Some of them will be destroyed because their service life has ended and others, once nuclear weapons are dismantled from them, will be used for various purposes such as delivery of humanitarian aid.

On the other hand, Dolganov admitted that, with fuel in short supply, Ukraine air force planes do not do much flying and the crews lose their skills.

Willing To Exchange Bombers

OW2403210593 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2020 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Ukraine told Russia that it is prepared to exchange heavy strategic Tu-95 and Tu-106 bombers for Russian-made warplanes "of another kind." No response has been received to this proposal thus far, Interfax was told by Ukrainian Defense Ministry's press service officials. Earlier, the Russian Air Force commander Petr Deynekin had said that the strategic bombers based in Ukraine will cease to be operational unless Ukraine hands them over to Russia.

The press office officials said that the aircraft are operational and maintained properly.

The office intends to make a statement on this subject Thursday [25 March].

Foreign Minister Meets UN Secretary General 23 Mar

OW2403180093 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1710 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Ukrainian Foreign Minister Anatoliy Zlenko met with UN General Secretary Butrus Butrus-Ghali on Tuesday [23 March] in New York.

The press center of the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry told Interfax that they discussed the situation in the former Yugoslavia and the problems Ukraine encountered due to the economic sanctions against Serbia.

Ukraine, the minister said, loses over $1 Mn [million] a day from the interruption of cargo shipments along the Danube.

Informing Butrus-Ghali of the course of preparations in the Ukrainian parliament for the ratification of the START I Treaty, Zlenko advanced the idea of forming an international fund for nuclear disarmament, which could be used to compensate for expenses connected with the destruction of strategic nuclear missiles in former Soviet republics.

The United States is offering Ukraine $175 Mn in aid to pay for the destruction of nuclear missiles. The Ukrainian parliament, however, feels this is not enough.

Butrus-Ghali was given a letter from the Ukrainian president regarding problems in collaboration between Ukraine and UN organs in resolving a wide range of political and economic problems.

Kiev Denies Claims of Mercenaries Fighting in Georgia

OW2403134393 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1322 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] A representative of the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry called incorrect and unsubstantiated the claims made by Abkhazian politicians that Ukrainian mercenaries are fighting in Georgian military units on Abkhazian territory.

Yuriy Sergeyev, director of the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry's press service, told Interfax that Ukraine endorses the UN resolution forbidding the formation of mercenary groups.

At a meeting with journalists in Moscow, leader of the Abkhazian national movement Taras Shamba claimed that 720 mercenaries from Western Ukraine are fighting in Abkhazia on Georgia's side.

The Ukrainian diplomat admitted that persons of Ukrainian descent may be participating in the Abkhazian conflict. "However, there are no Ukrainian citizens among them," asserted Sergeyev. He also said that last year authorities in Ukraine prevented the formation of volunteer armed groups of Azerbaijani and Moldovan citizens living in the republic to be sent to "hot spots."

Front Wants Kravchuk To Appeal to UN on Russian Crisis

OW2403183793 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1710 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The coordinating council of Ukraine's Anti-Imperialist and Anti-Communist Front appealed to the republican president and government to urgently call on the UN Security Council to consider possible actions by the world community if the situation in Russia deteriorates further.

Further developments in Russia may threaten its neighbors, says the appeal.

The president and government should do all they can to protect Ukraine's territorial integrity and create a presidential anti-crisis committee.

The Anti-Imperial and Anti-Communist Front includes 30 nationalistic and national-democratic political parties and public organizations.

Wednesday [24 March] the Ukrainian Congress of National-Democratic Forces made a statement in support of the Russian President's line on reforms.

The situation in Ukraine, says the statement, hinges on the stability of democratic processes in the Russian Federation.

The front urges all patriotic forces in Ukraine to say no to the "neo-communist attack." On the previous day the Popular Rukh [Ukraine People's Movement for Perestroyka] of Ukraine issued a similar statement.

Ambassador Meets With Israeli Foreign Minister

LD2403132393 Kiev Radio Ukraine World Service in English 0100 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Text] On 22 March Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres met with the Ukrainian ambassador to Israel, Yuriy Shcherbak, at the latter's request. The Ukrainian ambassador conveyed President Kravchuk's statement on Russia's developments and a number of official documents pertaining to the nuclear disarmament issue. The Israeli foreign minister expressed his government's hope for Ukraine's more active role in the Middle East multilateral negotiations. Mr. Peres is expected to pay an official visit to Ukraine in summer.

Authorities Use Gunboats To Counter Arms Smuggling to FRY

AU2303134993 Chisinau BASAPRESS in English 1930 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Text] Ismail BASAPRESS, 22/3/1993—Ukrainian border guards obtained some gun-boats to stop gun-smuggling through Dunay to former Yugoslavia. The correspondent of SOVIET ISMAIL was informed about this during his interview with the navy officer Matughin, who, in reference to the information from the special services of Ukraine underlined that such kinds of attempts were made many times. These border gunboats which work together with the customs have the right to check passports and to control documents of ships. At the same time they are banned from using arms or from entering the Romanian water-zone. The same newspaper published an interview with UN expert Lusef Lehman in which he claimed that there are no motives to blame Kiev for breaking world sanctions. He declared that Kiev is strictly keeping in line with the sanctions of UN despite experiencing tremendous losses.

National Affairs

Crisis of Power 'Brewing' Between Government, Parliament

LD2503123393 Moscow Radio Moscow World Service in English 1200 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Text] The crisis of power is brewing in Ukraine. One of the reasons is different political orientation in the highest executive and legislative bodies of power. The deputy speaker of the Ukrainian Parliament, Vladimir Grinev, has admitted that in May the parliament may deprive the government of emergency powers to carry out market reforms. To prevent the crisis, he said, the parliament should be disbanded.

Kravchuk Appoints Lopata Chief of General Staff

LD2403223993 Kiev Ukrayinske Telebachennya Network in Ukrainian 1900 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Text] President Leonid Kravchuk today issued a decree appointing Colonel General Anatoliy Lopata as chief of general staff of the Ukrainian Armed Forces and the first deputy minister of defense. Prior to this Anatoliy Lopata was deputy minister of defense of Ukraine.

Kuchma Pledges Support for National Press

LD2503113093 Kiev Radio Ukraine World Service in English 0100 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Text] Meeting with leading newspaper editors in Kiev on 24 March Premier Leonid Kuchma pledged the government's unconditional and efficient support for the national press.

The editors complained of various material shortages, including paper in extremely short supply, reportedly to last under three weeks. They called on the prime minister to display impartiality to newspapers in paper supply distribution. A suggestion was articulated to work out a program for the state support for the national press that would cover the national paper making industry's development, printing facilities and mail delivery demonopolization.

Sevastopol Asks Kravchuk for Moratorium on Rallies

LD2403214993 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1625 GMT 24 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS special correspondent Roman Zadunayskiy]

[Text] Moscow, 24 Mar (ITAR-TASS)—A closed session today of the Sevastopol City Soviet decided to introduce a three-month moratorium in the city on the holding of all political events—rallies, demonstrations, and assemblies—except for religious and national festivals. The ITAR-TASS correspondent learned from informed sources that the deputies have also proposed to Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk that the holding of a congress of Sevastopol Ukrainians at the main base of the Black Sea Fleet should be banned.

The deputies believe that the holding of the congress in the city, which is extremely politicized and electrified with emotion, could lead to clashes.

The city Soviet called on the Ukrainian president to support the three-month moratorium on political activity in Sevastopol and to suspend the decision of the Ukrainian authorities to cancel Sevastopol-Moscow trains from April 1993.

It was learned from the same sources that Sevastopol's procurator Ivan Vernidubenkov stated that there are no legal grounds to cancel the meeting of the city's Ukrainians. About 700 visitors from western Ukraine,

including national folklore groups, are to due to arrive in Sevastopol by 28 March. Fifty cadets from Sevastopol Naval Institute have been ordered to take part in the congress.

Donetsk Meeting Decides To Hold Strike on 1 Apr

AU2403165593 Kiev HOLOS UKRAYINY in Ukrainian 23 Mar 93 p 4

[Unattributed report: "A Strike on 1 April?"]

[Text] Representatives of the Independent Trade Union of Miners, the Trade Union of Coal Industry Workers, and the Coordination Council of the Donbass Regional Union of Strike Committees, at their meeting in Donetsk on 17 March, decided to hold a three-day strike as a protest against "the government's irresponsible attitude" toward fulfilling the demands of trade unions and against the adoption of "New Regulations" for the agreement between trade unions and the government. It was decided to begin the strike on 1 April.

Weather, Supply Shortages Cause Problems for Crimea Farmers

PM2403151193 Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian 1800 GMT 19 Mar 93

[By Vladimir Plotnikov and Igor Krasovskiy, from the Crimea; from the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] [Plotnikov] Usually machine operators in Crimea begin work in the fields during "windows," that is warm, spring-like days in February. This year there were no such days. And even now it is necessary to make use not of days, but literally of hours of suitable weather.

But while the vagaries of the weather are a normal phenomenon, the disruptions in deliveries of fuel and lubricants are an outright calamity. The state has provided for less than 50 percent of the requirement. Commercial middlemen are fleecing farmers and barter is being hampered by customs regulations on both the Ukrainian and the Russian side. There is a need for mineral fertilizers, plant protection agents, and so on and so forth. Farmers are having to run up debts with the banks. Meanwhile no one can say with any degree of certainty whether the harvest will be sufficient to pay back these debts.

Belarus

Leaders Differ on Idea of Collective Security

MK2403121693 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 24 Mar 93 p 1

[Igor Sinyakevich report: "Vyacheslav Kebich Argues for Participation in Collective Security System. Stanislav Shushkevich Continues To Advocate Neutrality"]

[Text] Belarusian Prime Minister Vyacheslav Kebich said at a republican conference of representatives of local soviets and the agro-industrial sector that doubts have arisen in his mind as to the feasibility of Belarus' acquiring the status of neutrality. In his view, only a collective security system can guarantee Belarus' security. The premier noted, however, that more thought should be given to the form of the republic's participation in this system. Vyacheslav Kebich said that he believes the involvement of the Belarusian Armed Forces in armed conflicts in other countries can be justified only in the event of "an acute, direct threat." According to the prime minister, setting up an economic union within the CIS, something on which Belarus has long insisted, is closely intertwined with the republic's joining the collective security system.

There are sufficient grounds to believe that Belarus is embarking on military and political rapprochement with Russia—and this is precisely what joining the collective security system means—by no means on its own initiative but under pressure from Moscow. It transpired from nonofficial sources that Marshal Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov, commander in chief of the CIS Joint Armed Forces, has in effect given the republic an ultimatum: Either Belarus joins the collective security system, or the military and technical supplies to its Armed Forces will stop. Following that, the government held a meeting attended by division commanders to discuss the viability of the Belarusian Army in the event of its lacking Russian supplies. The generals came to conclusions that gave them little comfort; for instance, if storage cell deliveries are going to halt, air force and tank units will be unfit for combat as early as in three months.

It is worth noting that Supreme Soviet Chairman Stanislav Shushkevich, speaking with journalists, has once again reaffirmed his previous stance on the need for neutrality. Thus, it is a question of disagreements between the republic's two leaders representing different branches of power that is at issue. Furthermore, the prime minister's pronouncements are at odds with the constitutional document—the Declaration of Sovereignty—which lays down the principle of neutrality.

To have a decision on Belarus' joining the collective security system approved by parliament will require a two-thirds constitutional majority. Mustering it will be no simple task, particularly so given the opposition's attitude and public opinion: People do not want the Belarusian Army to be involved in regional conflicts outside the republic.

Legislation Committee Chairman on Events in Russia

WS2503130193 Minsk Radio Minsk Network in Belarusian 1100 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Text] Speaking to an RIA correspondent, Dmitriy Bulakhov, chairman of the Supreme Soviet Legislation Committee, said: "We are not indifferent to the situation in Russia. We have too much in common, and any confrontation there can sooner or later influence our Republic and other neighboring states. We can only hope that Russian politicians are wise, and that they will find a way to compromise. As a private person, I think that Yeltsin was right in addressing the people with a plea. The time has come to cut the abscess and to make things perfectly clear. I am a lawyer myself, and I cannot accept the stance taken by the Constitutional Court of Russia and the active political role that it is playing."

Emergency Supreme Soviet Session Continues

Rejects Vote of Confidence

WS2403141793 Minsk RID in Russian 1138 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Text] The following issues have been included on the agenda of the Supreme Soviet session that began on 23 March: draft civil, criminal, and judicial codes; draft laws on the legal profession; on the Constitutional Court; on the judicial system; and on the status of judges. The Supreme Soviet rejected the issue suggested by the Presidium on the creation of the Belarusian Investigations Committee. After this, one of the deputies expressed "gratitude on behalf of the Mafia."

The Belarusian legislature will also listen to the speech of its Chairman Stanislav Shushkevich on the political situation in Belarus and abroad and consider the issue of the economic situation and the state and development of economic relations with CIS members. The session will probably elect the Supreme Soviet second deputy chairman. The proposal to consider the issue of confidence in the Supreme Soviet chairman (28 votes for) and the prime minister (33 votes for), was rejected by the majority of deputies.

KGB 'Forecasting' Proposal Rejected

WS2403154693 Minsk RID in Russian 1206 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Text] Speaking on the first day of the 11th Supreme Soviet session, People's Deputy Malashko said that KGB Chief Shirkovskiy had once told deputies that he had known the results of the elections in Lithuania three months before Brazauskas was elected president of the Republic.

Malashko praised "KGB mighty analysts" and proposed that this organization be charged with the task of forecasting the development of the events in Russia. Supreme Soviet Chairman Shushkevich suggested voting

on the proposal. However, only 27 deputies voted for the adoption of the proposal, after which it was rejected.

Deputies Comment on Russian Events

WS2403153193 Minsk BELINFORM in Russian 1338 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Text] Oleg Trusov, Central Council chairman of the Social Democratic Assembly, speaking to a BELINFORM correspondent said: "If Belarus wants to become a state of law, it must support the legally elected president of Russia. If reforms epitomized by Boris Yeltsin fail in Russia, there will be no reforms in Belarus. If Belarus fails to support Yeltsin, it will remain unclear with whom it is going to create an economic union, suggested by Vyacheslav Kebich." Deputy Trusov does not support the idea of the union and considers it a threat to the Republic's sovereignty.

The social democratic leader considers that the main mistake of both the Russian president and the Belarusian legislature is the fact that they have no support of concrete political parties. Making a forecast on the development of the Russian events, Trusov expressed hope that Yeltsin will "hold on until 25 April, the established date of the referendum."

During the first day of the Supreme Soviet session, some deputies suggested that the Supreme Soviet stance on the events in Russia be determined. However, according to Oleg Trusov, the beginning of the session "has been marked with uncertainty and waiting for a resolution of the events."

Gennady Karpenko, the leader of the Party of People's Accord [PNS], says that in his opinion, nothing special happened in Russia. He says that "the show of two leaders is going on in Russia." Karpenko considers that both Yeltsin and Khasbulatov forgot about Russia itself. Karpenko says: "One of them makes declarations but does not take any steps, the other takes steps without making any reasonable declarations." In Karpenko's opinion, "the events will soon start to calm down, and then will develop again over the issue of power. The Belarusian legislature does not have to make any resolutions concerning the situation in Russia." The PNS leader supports the idea of an economic union with Russia. With regards to the proposal to join the collective security system, in Karpenko's opinion Belarus needs more arguments in favor of this move. If an economic union is created, the idea of the CIS will cease to exist.

People's Deputy Gennady Grushevoy, chairman of the Sociological Forecast Center, says that if Yeltsin backs away, he will lose his political prestige. In Grushevoy's opinion, Yeltsin has only one choice—to hold on and look for his own legal, constitutional, and other arguments. The referendum may be held on an earlier date; other forms of opinion polls are also possible.

Edward Shirkovskiy, the Republican KGB chairman, says that the situation in Russia will "become worse." In his opinion, Russia needs an administration that will enforce the law, while the Congress of People's Deputies cannot do this.

Further on Agenda

OW2403165393 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1528 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Report prepared by Andrey Pershin, Andrey Petrovskiy, and Vladimir Shishlin; edited by Boris Grishchenko; from the "Presidential Bulletin" feature—item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Supreme Soviet has rejected the opposition leader Zenon Poznyak's motion that the agenda of the emergency parliament session include confidence in Speaker Stanislav Shushkevich and Prime Minister Vyacheslav Kebich.

The final agenda includes 10 items, mostly on legal matters, including legislation on the Constitutional Court. The last item is Stanislav Shushkevich's report. The ninth item, the economic situation and relationships with CIS member nations, is expected to be most controversial. Vyacheslav Kebich and Stanislav Bogdankevich, national bank governor, are expected to present reports on this issue. The deputies will express their views on what the prime minister and speaker said last week on the desirability of an economic union in the framework of the CIS. Heated debates are expected on revision of the country's position on the CIS Collective Security Treaty. (Belarus has not signed the treaty because by its Constitution the country is a neutral state-IF [INTERFAX]).

A new constitutional draft is to be discussed by the May session of the parliament. Shushkevich told the deputies yesterday that the constitutional commission has completed the wording of the draft.

IF [INTERFAX] Note: The draft institutionalizes presidency. The president would be "the head of the state and chief executive." Any citizen supported by at least 40 MPs or 25,000 citizens can run for presidency. Valentin Golubev, a member of the constitutional commission's working group, said that the "ironing out of the draft will be continued in parliament" because commission members are "deeply divided" over numerous issues.

Criminal Code, Other Issues Viewed

WS2503091993 Minsk Radio Minsk Network in Belarusian 0400 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Text] The 11th session of the Belarusian Supreme Soviet is continuing. On 24 March it began, as usual, with a discussion of miscellaneous issues. Viktor Peskarev, chairman of the Committee for Assistance in

Protection of the Rights of Victims of Political Repressions in 1920s-1980s, told the session about the inefficient work of state institutions with regard to the consideration of citizens' complaints and suggestions. Due to a shortage of financial means and personnel, the assessment process lasts too long.

After this, deputies resumed discussion of the draft criminal code. Dmitriy Bulatov, chairman of the Supreme Soviet Committee for Legislation, pointed out that the authors of the draft code took into consideration three alternate versions prepared by the committee, the Criminal Law Department of Belarusian University, and the Militia Academy. In his opinion, the code will become an instrument for combating crime. Deputies accepted the concept of the code and suggested a number of proposals directed at its development. The first reading of the document was accepted; the code was recommended for completion by the committee. It will be considered again at the next session.

U.S. Ambassador Submits New Cooperation Proposals

WS2403101693 Minsk BELINFORM in Russian 1143 GMT 23 Mar 93

[Text] David Swartz, U.S. ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary to Belarus, has handed over to the Belarusian Government a package of new proposals aimed at intensifying cooperation between Belarus and the United States.

The U.S. Government has decided to increase the humanitarian aid to Belarus in order to decrease the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster. A private American association for humanitarian aid will provide material and technical support for the deliveries, while the American Government will finance medical and other types of aid.

Air transports with medicines will fulfill their mission within the next several weeks. $500,000 will be allocated additionally for buying the required medicines.

In addition to $9,560,000 which has already been allocated, the American Government has granted about $65,000 for economic and technical aid in the sphere of Belarusian security.

The United States will send a delegation to Belarus to elaborate projects on conversion and determine the costs. Under the program "American Military Aid to the Belarusian Military," the U.S. Government is ready to allocate substantial sums for the social protection of Belarusian servicemen. It will maintain closer contacts between Belarusian and American defense enterprises at the request of the Belarusian party.

Joint U.S. Agreement on Investments Under Way

WS2503112893 Minsk RESPUBLIKA in Russian 12 Mar 93 p 1

[Article by newspaper correspondent Petr Romanchuk under the "Yesterday" rubric: "Belarus-United States Contacts Are Developing."]

[Text] Talks with a group of experts from the U.S. State Department are being held at the Belarusian State Committee for Foreign Economic Relations. A joint Belarusian-American agreement on protection of investments is under way.

According to Vladimir Valerianovich Radkevich, chairman of the Belarusian State Committee for Foreign Economic Relations, this agreement will create an appropriate legal basis for American investors. Recently, Belarus was accorded most favored nation's status in its trade relations with the United States. We hope that this agreement will encourage the development of our trade relations. Vladimir Radkevich stressed that the Belarusian party expresses great satisfaction with the talks.

In connection with the arrival of the groups of experts, receptions will be organized at the U.S. Embassy and the Belarusian State Committee for Foreign Economic Relations.

Trade Agreement With United States Enacted

WS2403102093 Minsk ZVYAZDA in Belarusian 4 Mar 93 p 1

[Article by unidentified newspaper correspondent "On Enactment of the Trade Agreement Between Belarus and the United States of America."]

[Text] On 16 February 1993, after the exchange of diplomatic notes between the Belarusian Foreign Ministry and the U.S. Embassy, the trade agreement between Belarus and the United States of America was enacted.

From the day of the enactment of this agreement, Belarus was accorded most favored nation's status in the trade relations with the United States.

In connection with this, a new tariff scale for the Belarusian goods which are exported to the United States is being developed.

The United States expresses satisfaction with the enactment of one more important agreement between the two countries. The U.S. reaction to the enactment of the trade agreement underlines the importance of the development of Belarus-U.S. relations.

Chief of Staff on Arms Reduction, New Technologies

WS2503113093 Minsk Belaruskaje Television Network in Belarusian 0600 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Text] A briefing by General Major Nikolay Churkin, chief of staff and Belarusian first deputy defense minister, has been held in the Belarusian Cabinet of Ministers.

[Correspondent] The issues which were discussed at the briefing included the concept of the Belarusian military policy and social reforms in the Armed Forces. The chief of staff clarified the current changes in the Belarusian Army. Speaking about arms reduction, he said:

[Begin Churkin recording] According to the philosophic law on the correlation of quantity and quality, the decrease in the level of military technique in our Armed Forces causes the weakening of the technical level of the Army. We invest in the dismantlement of military equipment, but we do not upgrade the quality of our military technique. The technical level of military technique remains the same. We should invest in the production of new technologies in order to upgrade the military technique. [end recording]

[Correspondent] In general, Nikolay Churkin stressed that the servicemen are subordinated to the legislature and the Belarusian people.

Headquarters Personnel To Hold Maneuvers 24-27 March

WS2403142093 Minsk Radio Minsk Network in Belarusian 1300 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Text] Maneuvers for commanders and headquarters personnel will be held on 24-27 March according to the program of training of the Belarusian Armed Forces. Their main objective is to improve the commanding skills of headquarters personnel, to check their ability to carry out tasks concerning the protection of our state security. Commanders and headquarters personnel of two formations and Army subordinated units will participate in the drills. Due to the necessity to save motor vehicles, fuel, and lubricants, all the drills will be carried out at the sites of the units' deployment. Minister of Defense Pavel Kozlovskiy will lead the maneuvers. First Deputy Defense Minister Nikolay Churkin has been appointed the chief of staff.

Moldova

Armed Mob Attacks Police Headquarters in Komrat

AU2503141693 Bucharest Radio Romania Network in Romanian 1100 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Bogdan Alexandru report]

[Text] The press office of the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Moldova announced this morning that a group of about 200 persons, many of whom have criminal records, last night attacked the police headquarters in Komrat, the so-called capital of the self-proclaimed Gagauz republic in the southern part of Moldova.

The attack was carried out with hand grenades and Molotov cocktails. A part of the police headquarters building, the cars parked in its yard, and the houses directly neighboring it burst into flames. The firemen who tried to intervene were stopped by the guardsmen and compelled to return to their base. All access roads leading to Komrat were blocked by persons bearing weapons.

At about 2300 [2100 GMT], the Komrat police headquarters was under the attack of a mob consisting of approximately 500 persons, most of them under the influence of alcohol. No victims were reported.

According to the news broadcast by Moldova's national television, the motive of the attack seems to be the suicide of a Gagauz person suspected for theft and taken into custody by the police.

A short time ago, First Deputy Interior Minister Victor Catana told a Chisinau Radio correspondent that the situation is currently under control of the police forces.

Cooperation Talks Held in Bucharest; Protocol Signed

LD2403114893 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1030 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Text] A session of interdepartmental committees of Romania and the Republic of Moldova has been held in Bucharest on cooperation between the two countries. A protocol was signed providing for the strengthening of links between the ministries and departments of both countries and between industrial enterprises and scientific establishments, and also on the establishment of joint firms and the improvement of cooperation in the fields of agricultural produce, transport, banking, and in the sphere of culture and education.

Government Unable To Obtain Needed Fuel Supplies

LD2503030493 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 2330 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Text] Moldova will purchase less than half its required fuel this year. The state association responsible for providing fuel has concluded contracts with CIS countries for the delivery of only 420,000 tonnes of gasoline of the 1 million tonnes required by the republic. Of the required 2 million tonnes of diesel fuel, agreement has been achieved for the delivery of just 900,000 tonnes. The staff of the state association sees barter deals with regions supplying oil products as a way out of the difficult situation.

'Mafia-Type' Structures Transfer Funds to Former USSR

AU2403130093 Chisinau BASAPRESS in English 1925 GMT 23 Mar 93

[Text] Chisinau, BASAPRESS 23/3/1993—There exists evidence which confirms that substantial financial means are transferred by Mafia-type structures from the Republic to accounts in other regions of the former USSR, declared A. Vatamanu, the chief of the section fighting crime organised under the Direction of Criminal Police of the Ministry of Interior, a mass appearance of criminal groups began during the moment of the collapse of the former Soviet Union. The hidden world, estimated a Ministry of Interior representative, entails exploits such as moments of reorientation and the merging with power organs and leaders taking out fabulous financial means. In connection to planned assassination, A. Vatamanu affirmed that it is frequently practiced by the local Mafia. A series of commanded assassinations began with the killing of Trautman in 1990, one of the leaders of the criminal world from Moldova, an inhabitant of Chisinau. After this event, Mafia-type groups started a fight for the redistribution of areas of influence. Between 1991-1992, victims of the ferocious fight became "celebrities" of the world, such as Bereza. Tatarinov and Dogari, Tahautdinov, whose nick-name was "Azif," disappeared without trace. By the end of 1992, Smirnov, a leader of the Mafia in Chisinau, was shot dead at the entrance of his house. The Mafia "hunt" began this year with the assassination of Botnaru and Munteanu on a clear day. The chief of the anti-Mafia section estimated that the commanded assassination of Trautman in 1990 was performed in exchange for 50,000 rubles. He also mentioned that it is now difficult to talk about a certain sum, the latter usually being a fantastic one.

Millions Recovered From 'Non-Declared' Sums

AU2403145093 Chisinau BASAPRESS in English 1925 GMT 23 Mar 93

[Text] Chisinau, BASAPRESS, 23/3/1993—Nicolae Bivol, the chief of the Financial Guard reported to a BASA correspondent that out of 1011 documents concerning normative acts determining the activities of economical agents checked by the Financial Guard during the period from the 18th of July 1992 to the 1st of January 1993, 73.6 percent contained certain serious faults. Nicolae Bivol estimated that beginning from its foundation and up to this year the Financial Guard added to the state budget 20.6 million rubles paid in the form of penalties from the total non-declared sum of 28.9 million rubles, and 24.1 million from the total sum of 50.3 million rubles concerning different types of fines.

Dniester Detachment Organizes Raid, Arrests in Tighina

AU2303152993 Chisinau BASAPRESS in English 1930 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Text] Tighina BASAPRESS, 22/3/1993—From our special correspondent: During Saturday [20 March] and Sunday, border guards of the self-proclaimed Dniester Republic and a special detachment named Dniester made a tumultuous raid in the center of Tighina [Bender] and at the two railway stations of the town. Under the pretext of fighting criminal elements, approximately 20 men from the suburbs, who were suspected of participating on Moldova's side in the military conflict of last year were detained. "We were detained on Saturday, around 1700 [1500 GMT], at the railway station Bender-2," stated an inhabitant of the village of Harbovat who decided to remain anonymous out of concern for his personal security. "A former professional colleague, now a member of the Dniester detachment, recognized me." The same inhabitant of the village of Harbovat said that he was taken into a military car, together with six other men from the villages of Hagimus, Farladeni, Varnita, and Copanca and transported to the forest of Chitcani. "There, we were interrogated, beaten, and threatened that if we come to Bender one more time they would kill us. We came home on Sunday morning, said one of the former volunteers who defended the integrity of Moldova, while questioned by BASA AGENCY correspondent.

Introduction of Leu Considered for Late 1993

MK2403131893 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 24 Mar 93 p 3

[Natalya Prikhodko report: "Between 'Bad' and 'Worse.' Moldova Plans To Introduce Its Own Currency in 1993"]

[Text] I was one of the first to see a new 1,000-coupon Moldovan bank note right on the day of my meeting with Moldovan National Bank President Leonid Tolmach. Naturally, I would have preferred to have seen a new leu—a sample of the would-be national currency— that has already been printed "in a European country" because coupons are a temporary measure designed to overcome the shortage of cash.

This deficit, Leonid Tolmach said, previously was not felt in Moldova as acutely as in the other countries of the former USSR, but it was aggravated by the growth in prices, steep wage rises, and a 15-month delay in the delivery of rubles from Russia. As a result, by 1 January there was no money to pay wages, pensions, stipends, and benefits...

Starting from the beginning of this year, however, the Russian Federation has finally started delivering 5 billion rubles [R] in cash and 7 billion Moldovan coupons printed in Romania (the same amount of coupons is expected to follow). So, by 1 April, Leonid Tolmach assured me, the problem of cash will be resolved in the republic. He described as unfounded the widespread expectations that the leu will be introduced starting from 1 April.

Moldovan Economics Minister Sergiu Certan said that the most favorable time for the introduction of a national currency would be the second half of 1993,

citing some stabilization in industry and agriculture that is promised to occur by that time.

Until the national currency is introduced, Dmitriy Ursu, deputy National Bank president, told the parliament, the National Bank will be unable to take responsibility for ensuring normal money circulation, because in the absence of appropriate control on the western border the money brought in from Russia soon finds its way back. In a telephone conversation, Dmitriy Ursu said that popular warnings about harmful effects of the introduction of a national currency were overplayed. "Introducing a currency is bad, but failing to do so is even worse," said Leonid Tolmach too, formulating his point of view.

We have already mentioned the "worse." But what does the "bad" mean then? Obviously, settlements with the ruble-zone countries will be more difficult until an acceptable exchange rate for the various currencies is established. The current shortage of goods and the budget deficit will naturally provide additional negative factors...

You can read about this in more detail in an explanatory note on the forecast of Moldova's economic and social development for 1993, that has been prepared by the analysis and forecast department of the Economics Ministry. The expected budget deficit is R75 billion and although industrial production will grow this year by 13 percent (the most pessimistic scenario that has been drawn up by the Market Studies Center allows for a 70-percent drop), even under favorable conditions it will not exceed 80 percent of the 1989 level.

Apparently, it will be bad indeed. The current situation in Russia, which gives fewer and fewer grounds for following in its footsteps, does not add hopes for the better, either. As a matter of fact, Russia, according to Leonid Tolmach, reacted quite favorably to Moldova's intention to introduce its own currency. Leonid Tolmach would not comment, however, how this decision will be met on the Dniester's left bank. He is only a banker, after all.

Those on the left bank reportedly want to introduce their own coupons too, unless the government of the unrecognized Dniester Moldovan Republic manages to overcome the shortage of cash through the measures it has been taking. Republic Vice President Aleksandr Karaman, however, denied suggestions carried by the press that the introduction of coupons was the first step toward their own currency. "If we are to introduce coupons, it will be done exclusively for purposes of internal money circulation," Karaman stressed, adding: "The Dniester region will stay in the ruble zone."

Upcoming Intellectuals Congress To Discuss Constitution

AU2403123193 Bucharest ROMANIA LIBERA in Romanian 18 Mar 93 p 3

[Dinu Mihail article: "The Climax of the Bessarabian Despair"]

[Text] At the beginning of 1993, a new formation appeared in Bessarabia's political arena, the Intellectual's Congress Movement. Its constituent conference took place on 9 January 1993, and approximately 3,000 people attended, representing all areas of historical Bessarabia (including Chernovtsy and Cetatea Alba) and the rayons in the Dniester region, Dubossary, Grigoriopol, and Slobozia, and the towns of Tiraspol and Tighina. The forum was convened because of the despair of the Moldovan intellectuals. Why despair?

—because the "chief of ruination" (we are talking about Mr. Snegur) of the national liberation movement wants to foist a pro-Moscow referendum on us;

—because under conditions in which the former communists are rapidly regrouping, when the economic levers are in the hands of heathens, the national being of the Romanians in Bessarabia is threatened.

—the delay in applying economic reforms, primarily privatization—keeps us in a degrading state of Soviet feudalism. When the citizen is not independent, his country cannot be independent either.

So far, the congress has organized conferences in the centers of all rayons of the republic and established support groups in many rural areas. At a regular session of 16 March 1993, the Steering Council of the Intellectuals Congress decided to convene the second forum of intellectuals in Chisinau on 9-10 April. As we were informed by Mr. Nicolae Negru, one of the five co-presidents of the movement (the others are Mihai Cimpoi, Nicolae Dabija, Vicu Bucataru, and Boris Matienco), it will be suggested to the delegates that they discuss the draft program and draft statute of the movement, including the possible modification of its name, so as to attract more people to the forum, regardless of the social category and field of activity of those citizens who share the ideals included in the Declaration of the First Congress of Intellectuals. Apart from that, the forum will express clearly its attitude regarding the draft of the new constitution of the Republic of Moldova, a constitution that is democratic in form and communist in substance.

On 9 April, the day the congress opens, a festive meeting and a concert to mark the 75th anniversary of the union of Bessarabia with the motherland, that is with Romania, is planned.

Kazakhstan

Nazarbayev Speaks at Entrepreneurs' Meeting

LD2403181993 Alma-Ata Kazakh Radio Network in Russian 1500 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Text] There has been a routine meeting of the Entrepreneurs' Council under the republic's president. The meeting examined issues concerning the implementation in practice of the national program for dismantling state ownership and privatization and developing and supporting small-scale business in the field of producing consumer goods and food products.

Nursultan Nazarbayev, who addressed the meeting, noted that in the course of implementing the program, Kazakhstan must finally develop an environment of property owners possessing full legal rights, being capable of overcoming the economic slump in production, and having an interest therein. There was also an analysis of the economic situation in the republic, primarily in the field of enterprise. The president instructed the council to prepare proposals for improving the taxation system and developing small-scale business in the production of consumer goods and food products.

State Councillor Tulegen Zhukeyev took part in the work of the council's meeting.

Businessmen Support Privatization

OW2403165593 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1529 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Report prepared by Andrey Pershin, Andrey Petrovskiy, and Vladimir Shishlin; edited by Boris Grishchenko; from the "Presidential Bulletin" feature—item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Council of Entrepreneurs that is presided by Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev met in Alma-Ata on Tuesday [23 March] to discuss the implementation of the National Privatization Program. Most of the speakers gave high grades to the program and expressed willingness to aid the President in having it carried out.

The council members welcomed the program's line on an accelerated development of market-oriented economic structures through most state-owned enterprises issuing stock, a massive privatization of state assets, the formation of a private owner class and the development of a competitive environment which would demonopolize production.

IF [INTERFAX] Note: Set up at Nazarbayev's initiative last autumn, the presidential Council of Entrepreneurs has as its members executives at public enterprises that have issued stock and private businesspeople. The council seeks to promote the implementation of a government program for the economic development of the republic. The council also assesses the legislative acts and other ordinances the government passes. The council members provide regular appraisals of the economic siltation in various regions of the republic and send recommendations to the president as to how to improve the efficiency of the managerial structures.

National Production Reported on Decline

OW2403185193 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1712 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Production in the principal industries of Kazakhstan has still been on the decline in January and February. According to the Kazakh State Statistics and Analysis Committee, it was falling at a faster rate in February than in January.

The national income in February went down by 15.6% as compared to that of February 1992, the figure for January being 14.5%. The volume of industrial production dwindled by 10.6%. Productivity in stock breeding was also sinking, as was the amount of livestock itself.

The increasing shortage of agricultural raw materials led to a slump in the production of basic foodstuffs. Thus, meat production went down by 15.4%, that of vegetable oil, by 15.9%, that of sweets and pastries, by 29.4%, and that of whole milk, by 30.9% by comparison to the same period last year.

Kyrgyzstan

President Akayev 'Fully' Supports Yeltsin

PM2403142593 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 24 Mar 93 p 1

[Report by K. Bayalinov: "Akims Obviously Not on Yeltsin's Side"]

[Text] As was to be expected, President Akayev wholly and fully supported Boris Yeltsin's political line: "I believed and continue to believe," Askar Akayev stated, "that President Yeltsin is one of the basic guarantors of the advance toward democracy and a market economy... In my opinion the desire of the Russian president, elected by the people, to allow the people themselves to decide in choosing a political system and methods and forms of democratic development is entirely legal. I believe it my human duty to express support for his efforts in the situation which has taken shape."

In any case there is no doubt that the Moscow confrontation is galvanizing the activity of diametrically opposed political forces which will undoubtedly be manifested at the forthcoming session of the Kyrgyzstan parliament. So far one can note only one thing: The sympathies of the new and old Kyrgyzstan nomenklatura (plant directors, akims, and collective farm chairmen) which exert key influence on the republic are obviously not on the side of Boris Yeltsin.

Turkey To Render Economic, Technical Assistance

LD2403134993 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1149 GMT 24 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent]

[Text] Bishkek March 24 TASS—Turkey will render the Republic of Kyrgyzstan economic and technical assistance. A corresponding agreement was reached during the recent visit here of a delegation from the Turkish Association of International Cooperation, the Kyrgyz Foreign Ministry's press-centre reported today.

Turkish businessmen have decided to invest their money in the local agriculture, power industry, public health services, food industry and tourism. Nine million U.S. dollars will be allocated to the Chui region. They will be spent on the construction of enterprises for manufacturing baby food and processing agricultural products.

Turkey is steadily expanding its aid to Kyrgyzstan. Several Turkish colleges have been set up in the republic. Kyrgyz officers are being upgraded in Turkish military schools. Turkey is prepared to finance and help the republic's switch-over to the Latin alphabet.

Tajikistan

Government Statement Condemns Murder of Afghan Students

LD2503100893 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0836 GMT 25 mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent]

[Text] Dushanbe, 25 Mar—The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan today issued a statement resolutely condemns the murder of three Afghan citizens in Dushanbe on 22 March by unknown persons. All three were students at higher educational establishments in the Tajik capital.

The statement stresses that the crime was committed by enemies of the Tajik people who are prepared to use any means to try to discredit the legitimate government of the republic and its attempts to stabilize the sociopolitical situation, and to sow panic among the population. The statement notes that the provocation is aimed at sowing the seeds of distrust between the two neighboring peoples and obstructing the process of normalizing relations between the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and Tajikistan.

Expressing deep regret about this act of terrorism and expressing condolences to the friends and relatives of the victims, the Foreign Ministry declares that Tajikistan's law enforcement bodies will make every effort to catch and punish the criminals.

Rakhmonov Requests CIS Help To Strengthen Afghan Border

LD2503095793 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 0800 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Text] Strengthening the Tajik-Afghan border is not only a problem for Tajikistan, but for all the countries of the Commonwealth that signed the collective security treaty. This opinion was expressed in Dushanbe by Imamali Rakhmonov, chairman of the Supreme Soviet of Tajikistan, and Sergey Stepashin, head of a delegation from the Defense and Security Committee of the interparliamentary assembly of the CIS countries. The Tajik leader expressed gratitude to the governments of the CIS countries that have sent reinforcements to the most unassailable sectors of the Tajik-Afghan border, and noted that the leadership of his republic is counting on more effective help, including help from the leaders of the interparliamentary assembly.

Dialogue Established With 'Last Rebellious Oblast'

PM2403155793 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 24 Mar 93 p 2

[Report by U. Babakhanov: "Harvesting Toil in the Pamir. They Are Harvesting Rifles"]

[Text] The Tajikistan authorities are welcoming the glorious Ramadan festival with a new "labor victory." The day before, dialogue was finally established between official Dushanbe and the republic's last rebellious oblast—Gorno-Badakhshan. In contrast to the Garm group of rayons, which the Tajik Government took by force not so long ago, in this case everything was decided by exclusively political methods. The republic's head, Imamali Rakhmonov, promised not to send troops into Pamir if about 2,000 armed Badakhshan men voluntarily surrendered their weapons, and the activity of the state organs in the oblast was restored in full. Then a government team was sent to Khorog: In addition to various Dushanbe officials it included Seyyed Mohammad Naderi, leader of Afghanistan's Ismaili sect, who enjoys unquestionable prestige among the Pamir people.

The East is a delicate business and the role of the individual here is impossible to overestimate, which was demonstrated once more by the envoy from "fraternal Afghanistan." After along talks Naderi nonetheless succeeded in persuading the former opposition members to lay down their arms. "Ultimately," he said, "if the accords are violated I myself shall give you as many assault rifles as you need." The very next day the first few dozen rifles were laid at the sheikh's feet...

The peace established in the republic in recent days is undoubtedly still very fragile and uncertain. Whether it becomes stable or is smashed to pieces at the first trial depends on the political wisdom of the former adversaries.

While these lines were being written your correspondent was told from reliable sources that a leader of the Islamic Revival Party, Davlat Usmon, former deputy prime minister of Tajikistan, had arrived illegally in Tajikistan. The aim of his visit is not yet known, but something else is known—the implacable opposition is continuing the struggle.

Turkmenistan

U.S.-Turkmen Most Favored Nation Agreement Signed

LD2503111593 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1054 GMT 25 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Vladimir Matyash]

[Text] Washington March 25 TASS—The United States and Turkmenistan signed an agreement on establishing normal trade relations in Washington.

The document under which Turkmenistan, a former Soviet republic, will receive a most favoured nation status, was signed by Mickey Kantor, the U.S. president's representative at trade talks, and Turkmen President Saparmurad Niyazov who is on his first visit to the United States.

The agreement gives "the green light" to Turkmen imports to the U.S. thanks to the most favoured nation treatment (MFN). At the same time the U.S. business community received good opportunities to organise business in and develop commercial relations with that Central Asian country.

The trade agreement is the first positive step towards forming required infrastructure for an efficient market economy in Turkmenistan, Kantor stressed at the signing ceremony.

According to Kantor, the status will come into force right after the Turkmen parliament ratifies the trade agreement with the United States.

The WASHINGTON POST newspaper wrote on Wednesday [24 March] that Niyazov makes his overseas trip at the invitation of former U.S. Secretary of State Alexander Haig now consulting the Turkmen Government on rising foreign investments in the gas-rich republic.

According to the newspaper, Haig intends to introduce the president of the newly-independent state to the captains of American industry and leading politicians.

President Niyazov Interviewed on 'Republic's Success'

OW2403223693 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1949 GMT 24 Mar 93

["Exclusive" interview with Saparmurad Niyazov, president of Turkmenistan, by unidentified INTERFAX special correspondent; date and place not given—item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Beginning from this January, the citizens of Turkmenistan are no longer paying for their communal services: the state has assumed upon itself all the expenses. In the opinion of official sources, the most distinctive feature of this republic, in contrast to most of the other CIS member countries, is its virtuous economic situation, as well as social and political stability. Turkmenistan's President Saparmurad Niyazov is revealing the reasons for the republic's success in an interview to Interfax' special correspondent

IF [INTERFAX]: How does Turkmenistan manage to maintain economic and political stability, consistently raising the living standards of its citizens and preserving civic conciliation, against the backdrop of critical situations in most of the other republics of the former Soviet Union? Would it be correct, in your opinion, to associate the country's present and future prosperity with its rich power potentials and raw material resources?

NIYAZOV: We are, certainly, associating our present stability and future prosperity with the republic's rich mineral resources. This, however, is only one of the factors. Our chief riches are our people, our history, culture, concrete people who believe in our course aimed at building an independent prosperous state and support it. There are many a precedent in history when national riches became the source of the people's misfortunes and calamities. Therefore, it wouldn't be right to presume that we are building our plans exclusively on our crude oil and natural gas deposits.

The way I see it, Turkmenistan's situation now is completely unique. It used to be one of the most backward republics of the former Soviet Union, which was previously referred to as an example of salutary influence of the Marxist-Leninist ideology on the destinies of the people who were oppressed in the past. Now, however, it is in the focus of everyone's attention. I don't think there is any special secret behind our stability, while our people are relying on common sense, which is inherent in them, good judgment and fairness. As regards our rich mineral resources, they just contribute to our success, just a factor.

IF: In acknowledging Turkmenistan's achievements in socio-economic sphere, certain means of mass media, including those in the West, reproach the republic's leaders, saying they are not enthusiastic about adopting European traditional democratic values. Do you think it would be justifiable to mechanically superimpose Western experience on Turkmen soil?

NIYAZOV: I believe European worths should be applied in Europe, and I don't see why they should be viewed as universal for the whole world. In admitting pluralism in the framework of a specific democratic society, Western politicians often tend to renege on any other interpretation of democracy whatsoever. The Western press keep writing about fundamentalism and growth of extremist forces in the Muslim countries. I will have to admit that an increase of fundamentalist tendencies in some of the countries comes as a natural outcome of the attempts to mechanically superimpose the European style of democratic development on the Oriental countries. By insisting that European principles are so universal, Western politicians, one way or the other, are provoking growth of anti-Western sentiments in some of the Muslim countries.

In Turkmenistan, we want to adopt a version of democracy of our own, and our aspirations to do so should not be regarded as our desire to be original or attract everyone's attention to ourselves. We need it in order to preserve stability and order in the country. Our democracy will take into consideration both international experience in building a democratic society and the national traditions and peculiarities of the Turkmenian people. There is no alternative to it.

IF: Did the recent meeting in Minsk of the leaders of the CIS countries affect your stance with respect to the Commonwealth's present and future? Would it be advisable, from your perspective, to look for the variants of a regional (such as Central Asian) integration in the framework of the CIS?

NIYAZOV: Our attitude toward the CIS countries has not undergone any cardinal changes. We still stand for the Commonwealth, but without any rigid structures. There can be only joint consultative bodies in the framework of the CIS, while their decisions can only be advisory. Economic and trade relations among the Commonwealth state should be equitable and mutually advantageous. Any references to history or current difficulties should not be taken into consideration, since all of us are now in complicated situation, and it is equally difficult for all of us to overcome it. We are, naturally, well aware of the situation and ready for compromises in reasonable limits. It goes without saying that we find inadmissible to encroach on the interests of our people.

As regards the ways of regional integration, we find this way most acceptable in principle. Some vestiges of integration have already manifested themselves in Central Asia, yet it would be premature to say anything conclusive in this regard.

IF: What would be your assessment of the efficiency of Turkmenistan's foreign policy over the last year? Can we speak about Turkmenistan's new priority partners and trends at the international arena?

NIYAZOV: I would assess as high the efficiency of our foreign policy in the recent year. Turkmenistan has joined the United Nations Organization, we have signed the Helsinki accord for Security and Cooperation in Europe, concluded mutually beneficial agreements with Iran, Turkey, India and China. We are establishing good relations with the Persian Gulf countries. On the whole, in spite of the fact that there is an element of mistrust with respect to the Commonwealth countries, Turkmenistan is gradually gaining the reputation of a solid and trustworthy partner.

Turkmenistan's stability and reliability has already been acknowledged not only by politicians but by businessmen as well, and you will agree, I trust, that it is a sure indication of the country's great viability.

As regards priorities, we are attaching primary importance to our neighboring states. First of all, we want to do everything possible to turn our borders with them into the borders of peace and cooperation. We are surrounded by friendly countries throughout the perimeter of our borders, among these are Iran, Uzbekistan, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan. We have signed conformable bilateral agreements with almost all of them. As far as Afghanistan is concerned, we have had a meeting with its government officials, and, hopefully, as soon as the situation there gets settled we will conclude a mutually beneficial agreement with it.

On the whole, in terms of priorities of our foreign policy, we have to single out our neighboring states with the same historical, cultural and religious roots. Your also will appreciate that Russia, certainly, stands out one of Turkmenistan's principal partners. This is what the gradation, in terms of our foreign policy, looks like, while there certainly is an element of concession. We are advocating the establishment of mutually advantageous cooperation with any other country. We have established good business relations with Italy, Argentina, Germany, Japan and a whole number of other countries. Otherwise, whereas there may be certain priorities in politics, these limitations disappear when we establish business or economic relations.

IF: What place are you attributing to Iran and Turkey in your long-term foreign policy prospects? What role are you attributing to Russia?

NIYAZOV: Much has been said in this regard in the Russian and Western press. Basically, everything boils down to the countries' vying for extending their spheres of influence. My own approach to this situation is like this. I am convinced that Iran, Turkey and Russia are equally interested in stability in Turkmenistan and in its neutral status. In this capacity Turkmenistan becomes a guarantor of stability in the region. We have concluded full-scale agreement with all of these countries, and I value these agreements as especially instrumental. Essentially, they are balancing the interests of the states in this region.

All these speculations about the built-up of the Islamic factor and the enhancement of Pan-Turkic sentiments, including the expressions of dissatisfaction over the weakening of Russia's influence have been invented by

the unscrupulous analysts. Just look at the people on the streets, speak to the Russian people, or the people of other nationalities. What Fundamentalism or nationalism are you talking about? The entire growth of the so-called Islamic factor in Turkmenistan is only manifesting itself in the fact that we have opened more mosques, and those who were praying surreptitiously are now doing it in the open.

Therefore, as the head of state I would want to assure you that we will promote and develop mutually beneficial relations with Iran, Turkey and Russia. These relations serve to augment, rather than impede one another. We are regarding all of these countries as our friends and partners, and we will proceed from this premise in all of our foreign policy efforts.

IF: Would you comment on your country's military doctrine? How do you view cooperation, if any, between Russian and Turkmen military?

NIYAZOV: The main objective of our military policy is to secure Turkmenistan's independence and territorial integrity. Our armed forces don't have any other missions assigned to them. The fact that Turkmenistan is bordering on friendly states partly resolves the problem of our national security. In addition, we have signed several military agreements with Russia which meet the interests of both Russia and Turkmenistan, with all of the other countries in the region being fully content with them. We don't have any territorial claims to any of our neighbors, therefore any conflicts with them on those grounds are ultimately excluded. The armed forces we are establishing won't be too large, but they will be equal to the missions assigned to them. As far as nuclear weapons are concerned, we are consistently observing now and will continue to observe in the future the principles implied bu Turkmenistan's status as a non-nuclear state. As regards cooperation between Russian and Turkmen military, we have set up joint forces needed to uphold the interests of both Turkmenistan and Russia. Can one think of a closer cooperation? I would have to admit, meantime, that there are many speculations and willful misinterpretations of our relations by the Russian press. Some politicians aver that Russia's southern borders are not properly defended and its military presence here is too weak. All this goes to show that some of the Russian politicians are still under the influence of their imperial ambitions, regarding Turkmenistan's state border as Russia's southern outposts. Life goes on, however, and the empire has been irreversibly dissolved. New Russia and Turkmenistan are building their relations on entirely new principles, including military sphere.

We are training our military personnel in Russian military academies and training center, we are cooperating in the sphere of the armed forces' logistical support, Turkmen and Russian servicemen are serving together. We intend to stick to this policy in the future, although, I would admit, we are also planning to initiate cooperation in the military sphere with some other countries. This will have to do with the armed forces personnel training and equipment. All these measures will not run counter to our military doctrine nor our positive neutrality policy.

Uzbekistan

Vice Prime Minister Wants Increase in Grain Production

OW2403184493 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1711 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Uzbekistan must cover its grain needs on its own, agricultural managers were told in Tashkent. Vice-Premier Ismail Dzhurabekov reported to their conference that last year grain was harvested in a total of 1,138,000 hectares, or 23 percent of arable land in the country. The yield was 2,300,000 tons of grain, in particular 1,400,000 tons of wheat, rye, and barley, 539,000 tons of rice, and 367,000 tons of maize.

Dzhurabekov complained that the harvest per unit area was low while 15 to 20 percent of the yield is lost in harvesting, transportation, and storage.

The participants of the conference want to increase the grain production to 3,000,000 tons in 1993 and in the long term discontinue grain purchases in other countries.

Armenia

Foreign Minister Links Russian Ties With Moscow Crisis

OW2403160893 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1528 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Report prepared by Andrey Pershin, Andrey Petrovskiy, and Vladimir Shishlin; edited by Boris Grishchenko; from the "Presidential Bulletin" feature—item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The recently appointed Armenian Foreign Minister, Vagan Papazyan, formerly an adviser to the President, told Interfax the future of Armenian-Russian relations largely depended on the outcome of the current events in Russia. He believes Armenian diplomacy "must in any case find ways of preserving normal relations with Russia, since the national interests of Armenia call for this."

Khasbulatov Yerevan Visit 'Undoubtedly Positive'

PM2403162593 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 23 Mar 93 First Edition p 7

[Correspondent Karen Topchyan report under general headline: "Chronicle of Interrupted Visit"]

[Text] Yerevan—The Russian Federation Supreme Soviet delegation headed by Ruslan Khasbulatov visited the Armenian capital on Saturday [20 March]. In Yerevan it had meetings and talks with Armenian parliamentarians, during which—the signed communique noted—"both sides expressed satisfaction with the friendly nature of Armenian-Russian relations and the constantly expanding treaty and legal basis of cooperation between the two countries."

Ruslan Khasbulatov stated: "The Yerevan meeting was very useful. We concluded that greater dynamism should be given to interparliamentary ties both within the CIS framework and in bilateral relations."

Babken Araktsyan, chairman of the Armenian Supreme Soviet: "Although our meeting was brief, it was yet another substantive step along the road of strengthening the traditionally friendly relations between Armenia and Russia."

In the opinion of observers, Khasbulatov's visit to Yerevan was undoubtedly positive. In particular, the fact is being noted that Russia, understanding and sympathizing with the Armenian people over their difficulties, is ready to continue giving our country as much help as it can to ease conditions for its population.

Bagratyan: Georgia Not Protecting Communication Routes

NC2403193793 Yerevan Radio Yerevan International Service in Armenian 1725 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Excerpts] The bridge over the Khrami River on the (Seretelli)- Marneulskiy section of the Tbilisi-Yerevan railway was blown up on the night of 22 March. The 60-meter suspension bridge, which stood on two columns, collapsed.

Armenian and Georgian specialists are determining the damage. Repair work will start soon after an assessment has been made.

Armenian Prime Minister Grant Bagratyan sent a cable to Georgian Prime Minister Tengiz Sigua about the explosion. It states:

The numerous explosions of gas pipelines and railway bridges in Georgia, mainly in the Azerbaijani-inhabited Marneulskiy Rayon, are harming vital Armenian economic activity. This worsens the republic's sociopolitical situation and helps to activate the forces of instability that aim to undermine the foundation of traditional and friendly relations between our two peoples. In the circumstances, we insist once more on the need to create joint Armenian-Georgian patrols to protect the pipeline and railway bridges in the Marneulskiy Rayon of Georgia. [passage omitted]

Prime Minister Grant Bagratyan received the Russian Ambassador to Armenia Vladimir Stupishin yesterday. Referring to the explosion on the bridge on the (Seretelli)-Marneulskiy section of the Tbilisi-Yerevan railway, the prime minister said Georgia is not fulfilling its responsibility to protect communication routes.

Wants Joint Guard Units

LD2403231993 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1807 GMT 24 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Tigran Liloyan]

[Text] Yerevan, 24 Mar (ITAR-TASS)—Armenia continues to insist on the necessity of creating joint Armenian-Georgian subunits to guard the gas pipeline and railroad bridges on the territory of Georgia's Marneulskiy Rayon. This is stated in a telegram sent by Armenian Prime Minister Grant Bagratyan to the head of the Georgian Government, Tengiz Sigua. The reason for the telegram was the blowing up of the bridge across the Khrami River last Wednesday night 17 March], as a result of which Armenia has been deprived of the last railroad communication through its northern neighbor.

The many explosions on communications routes in Marneulskiy Rayon with its majority Azerbaijani population has an extremely negative effect on vital supplies for Armenia, the Armenian premier writes. This situation worsens the social and political situation in the republic and increases the activities of the destructive

forces which are attempting to destroy the bases of friendly relations between our peoples, the telegram says.

An ITAR-TASS correspondent was told in the Armenian Government's press center that the republic's Deputy Prime Minister Vigen Chitechyan has left for Tbilisi for talks with the Georgian leadership with the aim of accelerating repair and reconstruction work on the bridge. At least 15 days are required to finish this work. For this length of time Armenia cannot receive grain, fuel, and other necessary freight which come by sea to Batumi port and are then transported by rail to the republic. The other communications routes through Azerbaijan and Abkhazia remain closed.

In connection with the halting of fuel supplies, electricity in Armenia is being supplied exclusively to vital facilities—bakeries, hospitals, and maternity homes, and also for the needs of industry and electric transportation. Houses, which do not have gas either, receive electricity for three hours a day, mainly at night.

Fighting in Mardakertskiy Rayon Continues

NC2403135393 Yerevan Armenia's Radio First Program Network in Armenian 1300 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Text] KARABAKH NEWS AGENCY cites self-defense forces headquarters as reporting that the situation remains tense on the Mardakertskiy front. According to reports, following the liberation of Nerkin-Oratag the fighting is now continuing in one of the suburbs of Mardakert with the Armenian self-defense forces maintaining the distinct superiority. There are no reports on the number of casualties.

Reports from Stepanakert indicate that the situation in other regions of Nagorno-Karabakh Republic and along the Lachin humanitarian corridor has been relatively peaceful.

'Nearly 100' Azerbaijanis Said Killed in Fighting

NC2403183893 Yerevan Radio Yerevan International Service in Armenian 1725 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Text] The Armenian Defense Ministry press service reports that the operation to suppress Azerbaijani gun emplacements continued on the Kapanskiy Rayon border throughout yesterday. Our defenders launched successful operations, taking several important heights under their control. The enemy fled from its positions in panic and left behind nearly 100 soldiers killed on the battlefield. Large quantities of military equipment, ammunition, large-caliber machine guns, Zenith launchers, and other weapons were seized.

Unfortunately, there are also casualties among our own fighters. Three defenders fell heroically. Others were wounded.

Relative calm has prevailed in the other border regions of Armenia since last night.

Scientific-Technical Society Founded With Iran

NC2403180793 Yerevan SNARK in English 1329 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Text] Yerevan, March 24 (SNARK)—The convocation congress of Iran-Armenia scientific-technical society has taken place. The chairman of initiative group Georgiy Mirzabekyan, professor of the Armenian Engineering University, has introduced to the congregation the history of the Armenian-Iranian relations in recent past, to talked [as received] of the center's tasks, the key goal of which is to establish mutual profitable and wide relations between Iran and Armenia in science and technique. The congress elected D.Sc. [doctor of science], Professor Georgiy Mirzabekyan as the chairman of the Iran-Armenia scientific-technical center.

Azerbaijan

Cetin, Kozyrev Visits Postponed 'Indefinitely'

OW2503054693 Baku Azerbaycan Radio Televiziyasi Television Network in Russian 1500 GMT 24 Mar 93

[From the "Telefaks" newscast]

[Text] It appears that visits to Baku and Yerevan by the foreign ministers of Turkey and Russia, Hikmet Cetin and Andrey Kozyrev, have been postponed indefinitely. They were to have discussions on a peaceful settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict with official authorities in both republics.

The KHABAR-SERVICE PRESS AGENCY was told at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan that this is related to the exacerbation of the political situation in Moscow.

Foreign Ministry Accuses Russia of Interfering in Ganja

NC2403133593 Baku TURAN in English 1107 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Text] Baku 24 March (TURAN)—Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan expressed its anxiety [to] the Embassy of Russia in Azerbaijan in connection with interfere of soldiers of the 104[th] Russian landing sub-unit into events in Ganja.

As it was informed, about 200 soldiers of Ganja garrison, under the ex-commander of the second corps of Azerbaijani Army Suret Guseynov, barricaded themselves in one of the sub-units and refuse to fulfill orders of the Ministry of Defence.

As the TURAN agency was informed by the official sources, soldiers of the 104[th] MLS [military landing sub-unit] of Russia, dislocated in Ganja too are ready to render rebels arm and technique.

Guseynov at his turn appealed to President Elchibey and announced that Minister of Internal Affairs Iskender Khamidov threatens him.

Guseynov agreed to surrender to authority if they guarantee him security. State secretary Panakh Guseynov is at present in Ganja and conducts negotiations with S. Guseynov.

Nagorno-Karabakh Asks Baku To Negotiate Conflict

OW2403142793 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1322 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] A real approach from Baku to the settlement of the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh would be its consent to come to the negotiations table with representatives of Nagorno-Karabakh. So claims a statement adopted Tuesday [23 March] by the Nagorno-Karabakh parliamentary Commission on Foreign Relations. "We were not the ones to choose the path of war," stresses the document, "it was forced upon our people by Azerbaijan, which violated its commitments according to the CSCE on the peaceful settlement of the Karabakh conflict." The statement confirms Nagorno-Karabakh's readiness to participate in resolving "all disputed issues through political means."

Fierce Fighting Reported in Agdere Province

NC2503122293 Baku ASSA-IRADA in English 0825 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Text] Baku, 25 March (ASSA-IRADA)—The situation in northern Karabakh and southern-western border zone aggravated. Hard fighting in Agdere [Mardakertskiy] Province, upland Karabakh, have been going on for the last two days, ASSA-IRADA was told by the Republican MOD [Ministry of Defense]. Not-withstanding the escalation of the attacks by the Armenian armed forces in this area, the Azeri combatants are holding their positions. The actions near Magavuz resulted in knocking out of three Armenian tanks and armored vehicles. In the southern-western border zone the enemy has concentrated extra forces in earlier seized Zangelanskiy villages and subjected our positions in (Sharikan), Burunlu and (Shayifly) villages to artillery fire followed by the attacks. Two of them were repulsed.

The border villages of Kazakhskiy and Kedabekskiy, Azerbaijan, and also those of Fizulinskiy Province adjacent to upland Karabakh were machine-gunned.

Attack on Magavuz Stopped

NC2503123393 Baku TURAN in English 0812 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Text] Baku, 25 March (TURAN)—Sub-units of Armenian Army continue attacks on the north of Karabakh aimly to capture the village of Agdere (former Mardakert).

So, from March 21 the enemy undertook several widescale attacks to encircle sub-units of armed forces of Azerbaijan in Agdere. By information from [the] front, Azerbaijani sub-units hold their positions.

The next attack of Armenians in this region within last twenty-four hours on Azerbaijani sub-units by the village of Magavuz was successfully beaten off. The enemy lost three tanks, one BMP [infantry fighting vehicle] and about twenty soldiers. Military activities on this part are not ceased.

Plans To Assassinate Armenian President, Others Alleged

MK2303141493 Moscow FEDERATSIYA in Russian No. 31, 20 Mar 93 p 1

[Boris Glebov report: "Attempt on Armenian President's Life Being Prepared?"]

[Text] On 18 March in the Azerbaijan Embassy in Moscow, during a roundtable meeting devoted to the most acute problem of the present time—"Terrorism as a Destabilizing Factor in Transcaucasia"—Asim Mollazade, deputy chief of the information and analytical center attached to the Azerbaijani president's apparatus, officially stated that according to the information in possession of the Azerbaijani side, foreign-based Armenian terrorist organizations are preparing to assassinate Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosyan and also all the leaders of the Armenian National Movement.

Asim Molla-zade did not disclose the specific sources of the information, but insisted that it was accurate and authentic.

Great People's Congress Ends on 'Lackluster' Note

PM2403143393 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 20 Mar 93 First Edition p 7

[Arif Useynov report: "Great People's Congress Assembles and... Disperses"]

[Text] Baku—The widely publicized Great People's Congress, which had been planned by its organizers to unite Azerbaijan's political forces, ended with a not very energetic general call for unity. It had initially seemed that the 200 representatives of more than 20 political parties and the same number of social organizations would present a program to society for getting out of the political and economic crisis.

But a week later, in the second phase of the congress, the auditorium was one-third full and both the speeches and declarations were lackluster. Observers believe that the congress' unenviable fate was predetermined by the fact that it was ignored by the People's Front, the "Yeni Azerbaijan" [name as transliterated] party headed by Geydar Aliyev, and the National Independence Party headed by popular leader Ettibar Mamedov. They also

point out that People's Front leader Abulfaz Elchibey was not at the congress either.

Just what happened? A people who are not even being paid their wages on time are bored with political feuding and proposals from various parties, and even more so with the debates held in their name, just as they are fed up with disputes between political leaders whipping up feelings and bad-mouthing each other in the newspapers. The sluggish democratic process in the republic needs a creative breakthrough—something that, regrettably, the authorities have not yet been able to engineer.

Commission Set Up To Examine Economic Efficiency

OW2403164693 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1527 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Report prepared by Andrey Pershin, Andrey Petrovskiy, and Vladimir Shishlin; edited by Boris Grishchenko; from the "Presidential Bulletin" feature—item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Azerbaijan's Acting Prime Minister Ali Masimov has set up a governmental commission which is to evaluate whether further work of cooperatives, small businesses, companies and concerns operating at state enterprises is expedient. This commission, chaired by Minister of Labor and Social Welfare Ali Kerimov [name and title as received], will explore possibilities of using such forms of entrepreneurship more efficiently.

Commenting on the decision, the Cabinet's press center noted that the commission would reveal whether these companies' activity, including foreign trade, complies with current laws and with their own charters. Within four weeks, proposals on making them entirely dependent on enterprises' budgets, or their complete separation from the latter, are to be sent to the Cabinet.

Georgia

Envoy To Russia Preparing Yeltsin-Shevardnadze Meeting

OW2403162593 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1528 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Text] The new Georgian ambassador to Russia, Valerian Advadze, named on Tuesday [23 March] by Eduard Shevardnadze, arrived on Wednesday in Moscow. Before leaving for the Russian capital, he told an Interfax correspondent that he planned to "immediately get busy with preparations for the meeting of Shevardnadze and Boris Yeltsin." The Georgian leader once again proposed such a meeting last week. The Georgian side wants to discuss an interstate treaty between Georgia and Russia along with issues concerning the presence of Russian troops on Georgian territory and the settlement of the military conflict in Abkhazia.

IF [INTERFAX] Note: Advadze has a Phd in Economics and is 62 years old. Until being named ambassador to Russia he was the head of the parliamentary commission on economic reforms. From 1989-1991 he was a people's deputy of the Soviet Union. He has worked closely with the liberal wing of the Soviet deputy corps, the interregional deputy group. One of its leaders, as is known, is Russia's current President Boris Yeltsin.

Observers are paying attention to the unconditional support shown by the head of Georgia for Yeltsin's domestic policies. On Tuesday at a meeting of parliament, he again expressed his republic's interest that the constitutional crisis in Russia end in favor of the president's course of action.

In Shevardnadze's opinion, Russia is seriously threatened today by the arrival on the political scene of "the most reactionary and dark forces—nationalists." "But if President Yeltsin can continue to act as consistently and as weightily as he spoke in his televised appeal, he has a good chance of winning," Shevardnadze stated.

Shevardnadze is convinced that presently, good conditions for putting Russian-Georgian relations on a normal footing are still intact.

"As I have found out, Moscow is now preparing to organize Russo-Georgian negotiations on the highest level," said the Georgian head of state.

In conjunction with this he gave good marks to the Russian Foreign Ministry announcement on the illegality of the resolution by the North Ossetian parliament (republic within the RF [Russian Federation]) to acknowledge the state sovereignty of South Ossetia (part of Georgia - IF).

Shevardnadze also expressed the wish that his possible meeting with Yeltsin were held in Tbilisi. Experts think that the Russian president is hardly likely to agree to such a proposal due to the current domestic political crisis in Russia.

Defense Minister Reaches Agreement With Zviadist Groups

LD2403142893 Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian 1200 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Report by Vykhukholev; from the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] Georgian Defense Minister Tengiz Kitovani and Vakhtang Kobalia, leader of the armed formations of Zviad Gamsakhurdia's supporters in western Georgia, have reached agreement on the joint operation of the Georgian Armed Forces and the Zviadist groups on the Georgian-Abkhaz front.

Russian military sources in Tbilisi told RIA that this agreement envisages, among other things, that the formations under Kobalia's command—which number around 1,500 men—will be part of a united Georgian Army during action on the Georgian-Abkhaz front.

Abkhaz Defense Ministry Reports Tank Attacks

LD2503110493 Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian 0900 GMT 25 Mar 93

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] The Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Abkhazia reports that the Georgian side has resumed howitzer and tank attacks against Abkhaz positions and the villages of Eshera, Gvandra, and (Tsekvara). Military operations have also been stepped up along the eastern section and exchanges of artillery fire are under way.

Russian Seismic Military Laboratory Shelled Again

LD2403145493 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1000 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Text] The territory of the seismic military laboratory in Eshera, Abkhazia, which is guarded by a Russian paratrooper subunit, came under mortar shelling from Georgian Government troops. RIA was told at the press center of the Russian Defense Ministry that there were no casualties among the Russian servicemen. There was no counterattack.

Retired Colonel Discloses Details on Seismic Lab

AU2403134493 Kiev HOLOS UKRAYINY in Ukrainian 23 Mar 93 p 1

[Besik Barateli commentary from Tbilisi: "A Bang in Semipalatinsk Resounds in (Chukotka), or Why the Seismological Laboratory in Nizhnaya Eshera Is So Dear to Russia"]

[Text] As a high-ranking military official—a retired Russian Army colonel presently residing in Tbilisi—stated in a confidential conversation, the military facility in the village of Nizhnaya Eshera has the status of separate battalion and is a seismological laboratory. It belongs to the 12th Main Administration of Russia's Ministry of Defense Headquarters, which deals with questions associated with nuclear weapons. There are all together 10 such facilities on the territory of the former Soviet Union and they constitute a special brigade with the headquarters in the town of Zagorsk-7 near Moscow. Beside Eshera, such military units are located in Plesetsk, Novaya Zemlya, Siberia, Kazakhstan, and elsewhere. The laboratory in Eshera conducts observations on the seismological state of the earth's crust at the southern flank of NATO, in North Africa, the Middle East, and the Persian Gulf. However, according to the source who used to work at the Eshera laboratory in the 1970's and 1980's, its activity is not limited to observations of the seismological state of the earth's crust. The laboratory is located underground at a depth approximately equal to the height of a 30-story building and is literally stuffed with expensive uranium-containing equipment. This equipment is used for conducting experiments with directional nuclear explosions. As a rule, nuclear charges of small or medium power are placed in shafts and detonated in such a way that the resulting waves cause narrowly directed wavelike tremors of the earth's crust in a specific area. According to the informant, as early as at the beginning of the 1970's, such a directional explosion detonated in Semipalatinsk was recorded in (Chukotka).

Tectonic weapons were quite successfully developed in the former Soviet Union, and this area of development was a priority one. That is why the Eshera laboratory as well as other laboratories of the 12th Administration were classified as even more top secret than the activities of military intelligence. It is claimed that the dismantling of the laboratory will cost several hundred million dollars, and it is virtually impossible to dismantle such precision equipment complete with biological sensors of seismological activity.

If one is to believe the statements by the Russian military leadership, today no personnel remains at the Eshery laboratory, which is situated in the immediate vicinity of the front line in the confrontation between Georgia and Abkhazia. About 800 Russian assault troops are guarding the territory of the laboratory.

Eduard Shevardnadze, as one of the high-ranking communist leaders back in the 1970's and 1980's, perhaps knew about the actual state of affairs in the laboratory and, for that reason, offered the Russian side the chance either to use it jointly or to invite international observers to monitor the facility. The Russian side responded by categorically refusing the offer.

In the opinion of competent military experts in Tbilisi, the very presence of this laboratory in the path of advancing Georgian troops last August caused a halt to their offensive at the beginning of the Georgian-Abkhazian conflict. As experts maintain, this particular laboratory as well as the strategically extremely important air base in Gudauta—the main center of Abkhazian separatists—are within the sphere of Russia's military-strategic interests in the Georgian Black Sea shore area.

Shevardnadze for More Western Intervention in Caucasus

LD2403142193 Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian 1200 GMT 24 Mar 93

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] Eduard Shevardnadze received a European Parliament delegation today. He stated that the West should intervene more actively in the processes occurring in the Caucasus, otherwise the events here might develop into large-scale, uncontrolled conflicts, surpassing the crisis in the Balkans.

Shevardnadze Wants Help for All Ex-Soviet States

OW2403212493 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2020 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Europe must be concerned not only about Russia but other former Soviet republics "so as a belt of democratic countries can be formed around Russia," Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze told a visiting team of European MPs in Tbilisi on Wednesday [24 March]. This follows a statement from Georgian embassy officials in Moscow.

Shevardnadze said that sooner or later, it would dawn on Europe that the Caucasus are its "inseparable part." To bring this forward, he said, the European countries must get involved in developing and implementing economic programmes for Georgia and other regional states.

Spanish Leader's Letter to Shevardnadze on Closer Ties

AU2503100193 Tbilisi SVOBODNAYA GRUZIYA in Russian 13 Mar 93 p 1

[Letter from Spanish Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez Marquez to Georgian Head of State Eduard Shevardnadze, written in Madrid; date not given]

[Text] **Letter From Spain**

To His Excellency Mr. Eduard Shevardnadze, chairman of Parliament and head of state of the Republic of Georgia

Dear Mr. Chairman!

It was with great interest that I read the letter that was sent to me in December in which you raise a number of questions that have great significance for relations between our two countries.

Spain follows with sympathy the intense efforts being made by Georgia to modernize its political and economic structures. The holding of elections to the legislative bodies of your republic signifies an important step forward along the path of development of the process of democratization.

The Government of Spain wishes to have closer ties with Georgia. The recent presentation of credentials by our ambassador is a step in this direction.

As you point out, a significant number of Spanish enterprises are already cooperating with Georgian enterprises in the most important spheres of the economy of our two countries. I am certain that this cooperation will expand in the future.

I wish to inform you that the Government of Spain is ready to grant credits aimed at the import of Spanish foodstuffs and equipment under the conditions of the general treaty of the European organization on trade and development [as published]. A Spanish company dealing with the insurance of credits in the export sphere is elaborating a concluding report on this subject.

I thank you for the invitation to visit Georgia and hope that I will have the opportunity to discuss this in detail in the future.

Yours sincerely,

Felipe Gonzalez Marquez, chairman of the Government of Spain
Madrid

Estonia

Rebas 'Far From Optimistic' Over Moscow Conflict

PM2403150693 Stockholm DAGENS NYHETER in Swedish 23 Mar 93 p A8

[Anders Hellberg report: "The Pressure on the Baltic Region Is Growing"]

[Text] "There is a bigger risk to the Baltic region and Estonia today than there was a week ago. I am far from optimistic that President Yeltsin will succeed in dealing with the situation," Estonian Defense Minister Hain Rebas said at a security policy seminar on the Baltic Sea on Monday [22 March].

According to Rebas, the Finnish defense forces have increased their level of readiness by calling up officers for service from last Saturday [20 March].

However, a spokesman for the Swedish Defense Staff said that Sweden has not increased its level of readiness because of the political unrest in Moscow.

"We are following developments," as Major Hakan Hogstadius, duty press spokesman at the Defense Staff, put it.

For Hain Rebas the greatest threat is that the Russian military interferes in political developments.

"There are large groups in Moscow which 'want to defend Russian military interests in the Baltic region.'

"The Estonian president and government view Boris Yeltsin as a guarantor against such groups. It makes no difference whether it is a communist Russia or an aggressive nationalist Russia—in both cases it is the Baltic region which suffers," Hain Rebas said.

The Estonian defense minister, who grew up in Goteborg, is on a lightning visit to Stockholm at the defense forces' Gallofsta education center. In his briefcase he had his portable telephone in order to be able to be in contact with Tallinn if the situation in Moscow deteriorates.

According to the new Estonian constitution, the country may not capitulate in the face of a foreign invasion:

"We will resist. But so far we do not have that much that we can resist with, only friendly words."

Rebas pointed to the division of Russian paratroopers and the Spetsnaz troops stationed in Pskov directly to the east of the Estonian border.

During his address to the seminar Rebas again raised the issue of Swedish arms aid to Estonia:

"Swedish aid in this field has not been forthcoming. It is very difficult for us to understand this Swedish hesitation."

Representatives of the Swedish Government have declared that at present helping the Baltic countries with arms is not on the agenda. Sweden has, however, donated old uniforms and a coastal surveillance vessel to Estonia.

'Royalists' Faction on Russian Legislature

WS2503113693 Tallinn BNS in English 1846 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Text] Tallinn, Mar 24, BNS—The most extravagant faction in the Estonian parliament—the Independent Royalists—today said the faction is concerned about the situation in Russia.

Royalists MP Kirill Teiter said in a press conference that the Russian parliament is dominated by "complete ignorance and lack of responsibility."

"Neither are we competent in all matters, but when this is the case we are clever enough to keep our mouths shut," Teiter added.

The Royalists hope that the different political forces in Estonia would cease quarreling and together defend the Estonian state from destruction and chaos.

The Royalists, who claim they are a fully independent "third political force," have 8 seats in Estonia's 101-seat parliament. They say their aim in the legislative body is to "deride foolishness." According to recent polls, their popularity among the people is rising.

Unit To Guard Russian Army Depot Near Tallinn

OW2303195493 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1924 GMT 23 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] On Tuesday [23 March], the Estonian government issued an order authorizing members of the "Kaitseliit," Estonian volunteer military organization, to guard a Russian Army ammunition depot in Astangu in the suburbs of Tallinn.

In the period from March 23 through March 24, the Main HQs of the republic's Defense Forces will call up 360 "Kaitseliit" members for a one-month training course. After that, they will be assigned to guard the depot.

According to the information available at the Estonian Defense Ministry, stocked in 21 underground depots are 7,500 tons of ammunition of the former Soviet Army. It would take at least 400 40-ton railroad cars to cart the ammunition out of the republic. At present, the depots are almost unguarded, the fencing around them has broken-down in many places.

Minister Juri Luik and chief of the Main HQs of the Estonian Defense Forces, Col. Ants Laaneots, are now addressing this issue with the commander of the Russian forces in Tallinn, Vice Admiral Yuriy Belov.

Laar Discusses State of Government After First 5 Months

OW2503112193 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1052 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Estonia is on the right track and its government has made great progress over the past five months, said Estonian Prime Minister Mart Laar.

He told the newspaper Rahva Haal that among the victories gained by the Estonian government was its ability to lower the rate of inflation, the pursuance of a tough monetary policy, re-orientation of the economy from East to West and rapid increase in foreign investments. Estonia's international prestige has also been enhanced, he said.

The worst problem is the continuing economic recession and crisis in agriculture which has assumed an "alarming scale." Large credit resources have got accumulated in the banks, but no one can use them in the absence of guarantees.

The government attaches priority importance to the property reforms, said the Estonian prime minister. He also said that measures should be taken to perfect the work of the police, to strengthen the material base of the defense forces and establish strict border control.

Lithuania Said Complicating Baltic Economic Accords

OW2403214593 Moscow BALTFAX in English 2011 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] On Wednesday [24 March] Estonian officials announced that the process of economic reform and the economic policy of the Government of Lithuania complicate the conclusion of trilateral accords between the three Baltic states.

The director of the Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs International Economic Relations department Priit Kolbre told "Baltfax," Lithuania is lagging behind even Latvia concerning monetary policy. He also pointed out that Lithuania selected smooth transition to the market system, trying to apply its elements to the regulated government-subsidized economy. "Our relations in the economic sphere are hampered by the domination of market system methods in one state and government ones in the other," said P. Kolbre.

The press-secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Estonia Urmas Reitelman added that Estonia is cautious about the tendencies of all-pervasive subsidizing in Lithuanian agriculture, and the increasingly sluggish tempo of privatization etc.

Latvian Delegation To Arrive for Trade Talks

OW2403214693 Moscow BALTFAX in English 2011 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] A government delegation from Latvia is scheduled to arrive in Tallinn [on] March 26 to conduct negotiations on the Estonian-Lithuanian free trade agreement.

In an interview to "Baltfax" Estonian Prime Minister Mart Laar declared that Estonia is interested in cooperation between the Baltic states in the spheres of foreign policy and defense. However, he stressed again that the economic policy of Lithuania makes prospects of trilateral economic agreements look unrealistic.

According to the Estonian prime minister, the republic is interested in transition from trilateral to bilateral agreements. "Trilateral declarations on free trade etc. simply do not work," he added.

Due to the similarity in political situation and geographical closeness, Estonia first intends to conclude a free trade agreement with Latvia.

"Which does not mean, Estonia desires no such agreement with Lithuania," said M. Laar. The head of the Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs International Economic Relations Department Priit Kolbre informed "Baltfax" that a free trade agreement with Latvia shall be bilateral, and Lithuania's entrance into the Baltic free trade zone is "a matter for the more remote future."

However, according to certain officials, the free trade agreement between Estonia and Latvia is incomplete and is not expected to be signed on Friday [26 March].

Agreement Signed With Finland on Double Taxation

WS2503113893 Tallinn ETA NEWS RELEASE in English 1951 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Text] Tallinn, March 24—Estonia and Finland concluded an agreement to avoid double taxation, the Estonian Ministry of Finance informed ETA.

The agreement signed in Helsinki promotes international investments, inter-state trade and free movement of people and technology, the ministry said.

Israeli Arms Industry Delegation Visits

LD2403145093 Tallinn Radio Tallinn Network in Estonian 1800 GMT 23 Mar 93

[Text] A delegation of representatives of the Israeli arms industry visited Estonia at the beginning of the week, led by General Dan Shomron, chairman of the Council of Military Industries. This was reported to BNS by the government press service. The delegation met with President Lennart-Georg Meri, Prime Minister Mart Laar,

and Defense Minister Hain Rebas. The government press service did not report on the subject of talks between the representatives of the Israeli arms industry and Estonian officials.

Several Estonian mass media have recently reported news of a planned major arms purchase from Israel. Estonian officials have not refuted or confirmed this news. At the same time, Defense Minister Rebas promised at the beginning of March that in two to three months he would hope to acquaint journalists with the Estonian Defense Forces' new and modern weapons.

Gen. Shomron gave two lectures to Estonian military and state officials while in Tallinn.

Latvia

Russia To Get List of Military Sites To Be Destroyed

OW2403215093 Moscow BALTFAX in English 2012 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Within a weeks' time the Bureau for the Control Over the Withdrawal of Russian Troops from Latvia shall submit a list of objects for annihilation due to their redundancy to the Command of the North-Western group of armies of the Russian Federation. This information was given to "Baltfax" by deputy head of the Bureau Ludis Pavilonis.

He clarified that the list already includes all subterranean constructions, shafts, and other anti-aircraft defense and missile units' constructions of strategical value, that can not be applied to civilian purposes. After these constructions are dissembled the Russian side must clean up the territory before handing it over to Latvian authorities.

Agreement on the compilation of the aforesaid list was struck at the last round of Russo-Latvian negotiations in Moscow last week.

Russian Soldiers To Get Permits To Stay in Country

OW2403215193 Moscow BALTFAX in English 2012 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] As soon as a package of associated accords is signed, Russian servicemen and their families living in Latvia will have to obtain permits to stay in the country. The accords were initialed last week at the end of Russo-Latvian talks in Moscow, Ludis Pavilonis, Deputy Head of the Board on Withdrawal of Russian Troops from Latvia, told Baltfax.

The permits will be good for various terms depending on the date the army unit will be pulled out.

The Russian servicemen and their families will need the permits to be able to cross the border freely. They will have to obey the same regulations as other foreigners for as long as the accords are not signed.

Pavilonis made it clear that everything will be done to speed the issuance of the permits and not to delay the withdrawal of Russian troops from Latvia.

Armed Forces Hold Command, Staff Exercises

OW2403190893 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1737 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Latvian Armed Forces have begun two-day staff exercises on Wednesday [24 March] following a decision by the country's Defence Council, Defence Ministry officials told Baltfax.

The aim of the exercises is to work out the main principles of management of the Armed Forces and management structures, and to ascertain the degree of their combat readiness and carry out measures to heighten it if need be.

The exercises involve the department of weapons and logistics, the department of conscription and mobilization, communications and information sections of the Defence Ministry's national defence planning department, the headquarters of irregular units (zemessardze) as well as flying squads and separate units of the Interior Ministry.

Leader of Parliament and Chairman of the Defence Council Anatoliy Gorbunovs is in charge of the exercises.

'Coalition for Accord' Election Program Viewed

OW2503111993 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1053 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The election program of the Latvian Coalition for Accord has much in common with the plans of the political forces that won the parliamentary elections in Lithuania. This was disclosed to BF [BALTFAX] by a spokesman for the Foundation for Supporting Latvia Aleksey Grigoryev.

On Wednesday [24 March] the coalition held its first news conference on the key aspects of its program. It leaders said they attach primary attention to economic questions, specifically land ownership. The chairman of the Farmers' Union Vilnis Edvins Bresis spoke for handing land to those who cultivate it now with due account to the interests of former owners as opposed to returning it only to former owners.

The coalition criticized the exaggerated interest of the current cabinet in foreign credits stressing that most of

the money is spent on consumption, specifically fuel, instead of investing in production and purchasing technologies.

A leading figure in the coalition, the chief of the legal department of parliament Aivars Datavs said that the coalition stands for granting citizenship to all residents who have lived in the country for at least 10 years. Persons who moved to Latvia after May 4, 1990 (the day when Latvia proclaimed independence) could become citizens on the basis of annual quotas.

The coalition favors general elections of a president which is not provided for by the acting constitution. On the whole it supports the full restoration of the 1922 constitution with amendments concerning civil and human rights and the rights of ethnic minorities.

The coalition was formed by the Foundation for Supporting Latvia led by the former foreign minister Janis Jurkans, the Central Employers' Association, the Farmers' Union, the Economy League, the Union for Youth Progress, the Fishermen's Union and part of the Democratic Labor Party.

Lithuania

Landsbergis on Russian Efforts To Discredit Country

WS2503121093 Vilnius LIETUVOS AIDAS in Lithuanian 5 Mar 93 No. 42 p 6

[Article by opposition leader Vytautas Landsbergis: "Arsenal of Fooling Includes Anti-Semitism"]

[Text] Evil forces want evil. They are trying to destroy not only the economy and the possibility for state structures to rule the country but also people's consciousness. They want to cause confusion so that no one differentiates the truth from rumors and lies. I am talking about Russia here. However, we could see the same in Lithuania. At long last, people's consciousness stops functioning, and they yield to emotional and instigative slogans. Such people are easily manipulated for evil goals.

We should try to realize what is happening in the former USSR. This will help us understand Lithuania's processes. Russia is slipping into the dangerous unknown. We see what methods are employed in order to prevent political forces and people from rallying around Boris Yeltsin and the strengthening of democratic beginnings. Democratic forces tried to implement this together with a person's civil duties when people were given the chance to feel economically responsible for their private property or when they could regain their land and acquire more economic freedoms. All this may not be implemented, everything may be twisted and shown as a wrong way so that the old Stalinist and Brezhnevist course looks attractive.

The situation in the mass media can show us a little about what is happening in Russia. Publications are really extremely numerous! Specialists may be classifying them as national bolshevik, communist, or stalinist. We can find among them orthodox nationalistic and extremely chauvinistic papers. All these are different groups. Some publications advocate heathenism and the Russia before the introduction of Christianity. They present even those ideas which the Russian party puts forward—Christianity is an ideology of the Jews and it is alien to Russia. Why? They do not want any moral system to revive on the basis of Christianity. On the other hand, the old slogan is obvious: "Beat the Jews and save Russia." It was a weapon in preventing the spread of democratic ideas as far back as the first Russian revolution. It helped the first Russian fascism to come out in 1906. There are such publications today as the "Russian Order" with the Nazi swastika on its title page. There are a number of publications and newspapers that are completely national socialist and Nazi. It may be difficult for us to imagine that Russia has them. They praise Hitler, Mussolini, and Franco as good men who restored order and exterminated the people of other races and thinking.

Stalin was also Hitler's secret admirer. This spiritual affinity is more important than the proclaimed programs. The fascist spirit and the deeds explain everything. The publication "People's Truth" urges a return to the ideal of the Soviet economy, reports on different Masonic or U.S. plots against Russia, and declares Yeltsin a U.S. agent, and so on. It writes about Zionists-Bolsheviks who firmly sit in New York, Moscow, and Israel and, of course, weave plots against the holy Russia and the entire world. If we compare our Lithuanian tabloids with these Russian papers, ours are only the blossoms, while the Russian ones are already the fruit. Their goal, however, is the same—to confuse people's minds and to cause mass psychosis. We may have thought in Lithuania that this was a method for winning the elections—to pull the country toward the required direction. There is no doubt that not only the officially acting and sometimes brutally lying party but also foreign forces were interested in this. We should foster no illusions about this. Their aspirations are much broader than a mere guarantee of a favorable Lithuanian government. If anti-Semitic or similar publications appear in Lithuania, this means Lithuania's discredit in the Western world. Such publications may be quoted and shown there as proof that Lithuania and its people are like this. It is very difficult to defend oneself when a concerned institution deliberately creates such evidence.

I do not have the slightest doubt that Lithuania's discredit in the Western world is one of the key, if not the essential, goals of the Russian military intelligence and KGB network. It is easy to imagine the danger of the publications which, for example, in the form of ostensible advertising, promote the idea that those who do not read "our" papers are Jews or that Jews are damaging Lithuania's economic and political life. No matter how

silly such publications may be, their circulation in the West will not promote, but will prevent, foreign investments. Such information will delay or stop the influx of the capital which is in some way related to certain businessmen of Jewish descent or to their associations. Everyone can easily understand that it is difficult to find a business firm or a bank anywhere in the world that would not have some employees of Jewish descent. In this case, Lithuania's image as a country that has an "anti-Semitic disposition" is economically very unfavorable. This goal may be easily attained, if we cannot make out who is doing what and why.

Such methods were employed, let us say, when Germany was trying to join NATO and the Soviet Union was opposing this with every possible means. It is then than swastikas appeared on buildings and Jewish tombs and the destruction of Jewish cemeteries began in Germany. All this meant—just look what forces are emerging i Germany and how dangerous it is to let this country have its Army, to say nothing of NATO. Such actions are very expedient. We remember them from the Sajudis origins when there were attempts to discredit this movement and depict it as nationalistic, full of ethnic hatred, and dangerous to peace and stability. We know those methods, but people forget them. At long last the ideological confusion of minds and the instigation of evil feelings against another nation, religion, or group of people in Lithuania, for example, against the reform supporters, merge together. Now reformists are being accused of implementing bad reforms. Opponents say that reforms were unnecessary and that former life was better, and so on. No one, however, questions the following situation. The former collective property has been devastated and stolen. People clearly saw how local "groups of comrades" or certain hunters' clubs or the local authorities destroyed this collective property themselves or let others (their relatives) steal and "denationalize" it. Why has not at least a single official who did this been punished, for example, by the party? Why hasn't the Lithuanian Democratic Labor Party [LDLP] thrown out a single leader who steals? Obviously they need this confusion so that people are unable to think normally—having clearly seen who stole the tractor they still vote for the thief.

On the other hand, the current decisions about the cardinal issues of Lithuania's economy and future may cause and will probably cause even greater economic difficulties. The confusion will enable the leaders to address all this hatred to the wrong person. The legislature has adopted a huge inflationary budget with very dangerous consequences. The lawmakers are considering the LDLP proposal to suspend the restoration of land when farmers have been looking forward to tilling their own land this spring.... Our hopeless dependence on Russia's energy resources has also become obvious. I wonder how we managed to retain such dependence, which ministry blocked reform, who defended that ministry, and who prevented us from finding an alternative supply channel during three years. If Russia were to cut oil supplies under any pretext that Lithuania has not done one thing or another, we will confront not only great difficulties in working the land and finding fuel but also in Lithuania's unpreparedness to resist the blow collectively. We have lost what we had in 1990, when you could ask people during the blockade—will we endure or should we surrender? And people, at least those who spoke loudly, responded—we will survive! We were able to endure then. I fear today, however, that Russia may hear the response—"we give up." Let us not succumb.

Social Democrats Support 'Russian Democratic Forces'

WS2503113493 Vilnius ELTA NEWS BULLETIN in English 1535 GMT 24 Mar 93

[From ELTA "NEWS BULLETIN" No. 212]

[Text] March 24, 1993—Yesterday the Lithuanian Social Democrat party gave its press-conference at the Seimas. The party member Vytautas Pleckaitis said that the Social Democrat party is concerned by the present situation in Russia, the party members hope that the conflict between the Russian President and the Supreme Council will not grow into a civil war and will not involve the army. Social Democrats expressed their support for the Russian democratic forces.

Representatives of the Social Democratic party also presented their opinion on the agrarian and foreign policy. According to them, neither the Seimas, nor the Government has a clear and effective plan how to solve the agricultural problems. If the interests of the land restitution and its effective use are not reasonably regulated, then next year the pessimistic prognosis of the European Economic Community will come true. Experts of the EEC have calculated that in 1993-1994 there will be a shortage of food products for Lithuanian people, not to mention their export.

Social Democrats noted that there is no integration of the Baltic States which used to be often declared earlier. Latvian and Estonian leaders speak about specific agreements which concern only Latvia and Estonia, while Lithuania is being left aside. There is no actual cooperation between Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, except for several declarations.

Social Democrats also touched upon the shameful and scandalous situation on the Lithuanian border, the Lazdijai customs office. According to them, only the chief customer, the Lithuanian Minister of National Defence and the Minister of Economics are to be blamed for this.

Delegation to Russia Criticizes Formation of New Group

OW2503112093 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1053 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The head of the Lithuanian delegation to talks with Russia Ceslovas Stankevicius has told BF [BALTFAX] that the formation of an absolutely new group is an indication that there will be no continuity in the country's policy.

On Wednesday [24 March] the parliamentary foreign affairs committee decided to recommend to the president to approve the list of new delegation members proposed by the foreign minister. The president is expected to issue an appropriate decree later this week.

The opposition leader Vytautas Landsbergis has told BF that the committee decision was made at the initiative of the ruling party. The opposition constituting the minority in the committee did not take part in the voting, he claimed, because its supports the earlier decision not to change the delegation but only add new members.

Landsbergis regretted that only two persons having some experience in negotiations with Russia were proposed to the new delegation.

Second Stage of Russian Withdrawal To End 31 Mar

OW2403190693 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1737 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] In accordance with the schedule for the withdrawal of Russian troops from Lithuania, March 31 is to become the date of the completion of its second stage. By that time 92 military units sub-units and offices are to be withdrawn.

According to the Lithuanian Government's representative on the withdrawal of Russian troops, colonel Stasys Knezys, all units mentioned with the exception of the Kaunas helicopter establishment are already leaving the territory of the republic. Last week a claim was received for the withdrawal of the Third Coast-Guard Division located in Klaipeda and Telsiai. Its 1,600 troops and material are to leave Lithuania by August, 20 this year.

In an interview given to the "Lietuvos rytas" newspaper S. Knezys notes that the withdrawal of paramilitary, air force and anti-aircraft defense units is almost complete.

Since the schedule for the withdrawal was adopted on September, 8 1992 the number of Russian servicemen present on the territory of Lithuania has dropped by approximately 40 percent and the Ministry of Territorial Defense now knows it to be at 126 hundred.

Sajudis Chairman on Mistakes, Reorganization

WS2503120893 Vilnius LIETUVOS AIDAS in Lithuanian 5 Mar 93 No. 42, p 4

[Interview with Juozapas Algirdas Katkus, third chairman of the Sajudis Seimas Council, by newspaper commentator Kestutis Zickus: "People Will Come If They Are Able To Implement Their Ideas"]

[Text] [Zickus] Kaunas inhabitants know you well. Others, however, may not. Thus, could you, please tell them about yourself?

[Katkus] I was born in Kretinga, Prismonciai village, in 1936. My parents and three sisters were deported to Siberia in 1948. The remaining three children, including myself, were exiled to Krasnoyarsk in 1949. We met with our parents some time later. In 1957, I returned to Lithuania, worked as a driver, and attended evening classes. Then I passed my examinations as an external student, entered the Kaunas Politechnical Institute, and became an engineer. I remained to work at the Faculty of Machine Production, defended a dissertation, and lectured.

When Sajudis emerged, I set up its group at the faculty and the institute. After the elections to the Supreme Council, I was elected the chairman of the Sajudis group at the Kaunas Politechnical Institute. A year later, I became the chairman of the Kaunas Sajudis Council, while after the last elections I found myself in the Seimas.

[Zickus] How has Kaunas managed to preserve a strong Sajudis organization?

[Katkus] The Kaunas Sajudis was powerful at the very beginning. It weakened after the most active members had been elected to the legislature and after political parties had begun forming. It was clear that we had to discipline our organization, and we tried to do our best.

Talks about 'Kaunas voting incorrectly' are groundless. We also thought the same during the presidential campaign and went to help others. You see that they voted well. However, we did not win as many votes as we could. This requires continuous work.

It was very difficult to retain the press but we did it. KAUNO AIDAS helped Jonava, Klaipeda, and others very much during the electoral campaign. We formed a group that supervised the southwestern regions. It included devoted people who know how to reconcile Poles, Russians, and Lithuanians. The commission headed by Professor Nezgada is engaged in social issues—people come from other regions, even from Zarasai. We are unable to help everyone but we are fully aware of the actual situation, officials' greed, bribery, and ignoring of people's interests.

Sajudis' principal mistake was its alienation from the people and society. Sajudis had to bridge the gap between the Supreme Council and the nation but it did not perform the function of an intermediary.

[Zickus] Sajudis is being reorganized. What should the new party and the new Sajudis be like? What about their interrelations and ties with other non-communist parties?

[Katkus] The party must be oriented toward a person it works for and depends on. It should be right-wing and conservative. Its priorities must be the protection of independence through all possible measures, the Army withdrawal, and the continuation of reform. Private property is the most important thing. Social issues, however, are no less vital than state problems.

The party should unite into one big bloc such groups and people who presently cannot easily find their place but who are consistent and whose thinking, behavior, and goals are close to the rightists. Persons who are allergic to any party could become our supporters or work at Sajudis or Santara clubs. All these issues are subject to discussion but in any case, there should be a rigid structure because nothing will come of a muddle. Certainly, there will be some competition in the right-wing bloc. However, it is necessary because there are really some ineffective political groups there.

People will select for themselves. If our work is serious and if people see that here they can implement their ideas, they will come.

[Zickus] Thank you.